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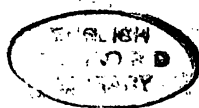
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Morte Arthure.

EDITED FROM

ROBERT THORNTON'S MS. (AB. 1440 A.D.)

IN THE LIBRARY OF LINCOLN CATHEDRAL,

BY

GEORGE G. PERRY, M.A.,

PREBENDARY OF LINCOLN AND RECTOR OF WADDINGTON; LATE FELLOW AND TUTOR OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.



LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE EARLY ENGLISH TEXT SOCIETY,
BY TRÜBNER & CO., 60, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLXV.

PREFACE.

It is confessedly almost impossible to fix on the exact point of time when the Semi-Saxon dialect, which had replaced the more formal Anglo-Saxon after the Norman Conquest, passed into the *Early English*. Those characteristic changes which constitute the *modernization* of a language were proceeding gradually. Inflections were being lost, distinctive marks of gender and case neglected, variations of meaning coming to be expressed rather by combinations of words than by changes in the words themselves, and the result was that about the middle of the thirteenth century England was speaking a language differing by a wide interval from that of the country three centuries before. This *Early English* stage of the language may be considered to extend from about the beginning of the reign of Henry III. to the end of that of Edward III., when it was succeeded by the *Middle English*.¹ During the whole of this period continual modification of the English tongue was going on. The language of the proclamation to the people of Huntingdonshire differs greatly from the language of Chaucer, and even from

¹ See Dr. Latham on "The English Language," chap. iii.; and "Hallam's Introduction to Literature of Europe," chap. i.

that of *Piers Plowman* and of the poem which is here put forth. It is probable that the *Morte Arthure* is somewhat later in date than *Piers Plowman*, but that it still falls within the period marked out for the limits of *Early English*. In comparing together the writings of this date we are at once struck by a distinction which seems to separate them into two classes. In Chaucer we see the tendency towards foreign words and idioms, and the adoption of the rhyming metre invented during the decay of the Latin tongue; in *Piers Plowman* and the *Morte Arthure* we trace the prevalence of the Saxon words and rhythm, the alliterative¹ or accented metre being preferred to the final cadence.

In the judgment of Warton the latter style was an evident and palpable barbarism. This critic severely censures the author of *Piers Plowman*, and, but that he was unacquainted with the *Morte Arthure*, would doubtless have included its author also in his condemnation—"Instead of availing himself of the rising and rapid improvements of the English language Longland prefers and adopts the style of the Anglo-Saxon poets. Nor did he make these writers the models of his language only: he likewise imitates their alliterative versification, which consisted in using an aggregate of words beginning with the same letter. But this imposed constraint of seeking identical initials and the affectation of obsolete English, by demanding a constant and necessary departure from the natural and obvious forms of expression, contributed also to render his manner extremely perplexed, and to disgust the readers with obscurities."² It is hoped that the readers of the following poem will not be so

¹ "Alliteration is the general character of all the early Gothic metres."—*Latham*.

² Warton's *History of English Poetry*, i. 266.

readily disgusted; those very obscurities which were so distasteful to the polite critic constituting some of the chief recommendation of the composition. It is hoped also that the poem will be welcomed not only on philological and grammatical grounds, but on the ground also of its own intrinsic merit—for the fire, vigour, and liveliness of its style, and the vast profusion of descriptive epithets which it pours out before the reader.

This version of the *Morte Arthure* is printed from a manuscript in the Library of Lincoln Cathedral, commonly known as the “Thornton Romances.” It is a thick volume containing several poems of the Arthur type, as well as many pieces in prose, both English and Latin. The greater part of this volume was written by Robert Thornton, a native of Oswaldkirk, in Yorkshire, and Archdeacon of Bedford in the Diocese of Lincoln, about the middle of the fifteenth century. The date of Archdeacon Thornton and his connection with Lincoln Cathedral can be ascertained pretty accurately, as among the archives of the Cathedral there is preserved an instrument or deed of considerable importance, attested by him as Archdeacon, which bears date 1439.¹

So valuable is this collection of ancient pieces which has been preserved by the labour of the Archdeacon, that doubtless all lovers of antiquity will be willing to concur in the wish with which the *Morte Arthure* concludes, “Thornton dictus sit benedictus.” The poem with which we are now concerned was first published from the Lincoln manuscript by Mr. Halli-

¹ This instrument is known by the name of the “*Laudum* of Alnwick,” and to this day every Prebendary of the Church takes oath on his admission to observe it. It is a decree (*id quod laudatum est*, approved or determined) of Bishop Alnwick, in reference to certain matters in dispute between the Dean and the Canons.

well in the year 1847. The form which was then adopted was that of an expensive quarto, and the value of the book was sought to be further enhanced by a rigid limitation of the issue to seventy-five copies. These have all, probably, long ago found their way into the great libraries of the country, and the poem has become as inaccessible to the general reader as though it had never been printed. Under these circumstances the Committee of the Early English Text Society have judged it desirable that a re-publication of the poem should be made. The present edition differs from that of Mr. Halliwell in the printing of two of his lines in one, in the marking by italic letters all expansions of the manuscript contractions, and the addition of side-notes and a glossary. In the first of these points the arrangement of the manuscript is followed, the lines being always written there as here printed. A comparison of the two methods will also, it is thought, result in a decided preference, as regards rhythm, of the method here used. With respect to the expansions of the contractions, it will be observed that there is no regularity in the spelling used, a final *e* being sometimes appended to words, sometimes not. Great care has, in fact, been taken to reproduce exactly the *irregularity* which is one of the most marked features of the spelling of this manuscript. In no case has a final *e* been added unless indicated by a strong and decided mark; while the threefold variation in the writing of words beginning with *th* has been carefully followed.¹ The form of

¹ *The, This, That, Thus, Thou, Thi, These*, etc., are sometimes written in this manuscript as at present spelled, sometimes with the Y and the final letter put over it, sometimes with the Y and the other letters following in a line; e.g. *That, Y^t, Yat, This, Y^e, Yis*. In the second of these cases the letters are printed in italic; in the third in roman type.

the thorn letter (þ) has been adopted in the printing, instead of the form used in the manuscript (Y), as it has been thought more agreeable to the date of the composition, and more in unison with the other publications of the same period printed by the E.E.T.S. There can be no doubt that the two forms represent substantially the same sound. The text having undergone several careful collations with the manuscript, it is hoped that it is as near perfect as may be. In some few points it will be found to differ from the very accurate edition of Mr. Halliwell.

As to the poem itself, it is held by Sir F. Madden that this is the "Gret gest of Arthure" composed by Huchowne, a Scotch ballad writer of the fourteenth century. This opinion is combated by Mr. Morris in his Preface to "Alliterative Poems," who proves that the poem was not originally written in the Scotch dialect, but in one of the Northumbrian dialects spoken South of the Tweed. Mr. Morris is also of opinion that the text of the poem had been considerably altered by a Midland transcriber before it fell into the hands of Robert Thornton. Thornton, as a Northumbrian, would probably have preferred the original reading, but finding the manuscript with its Southern modifications, he transcribed it as it stood, without attempt at restoration. In spite, however, of his having yielded to the changes of Southern transcribers, it is certain that we owe to Robert Thornton, of Oswaldkirk, a great debt of gratitude for having made a copy of the poem which has survived to our day. It is a grand specimen of Early English poetry, exhibiting some fine traits common to the early poetry of many nations, and certain special peculiarities of its own which are well worth careful study.

In almost all early poetry may be noted a simplicity of language united with what may be termed a recklessness of assertion and a contempt of the conditions required for constituting the probable. Effect is sought to be produced not by the subtle analysis of thought and feeling, nor by the description of scenery and natural objects, but by the crowding together of startling incidents, and the ascription of marvellous powers and prowess to the favoured hero. Early poetry is, as it were, the expression of inexperience, of thoughtlessness and light-heartedness, not bearing the marks of a complicated state of society, where the restless struggle for social superiority absorbs the energies and gives a grave cast to the reflections. Now this gay and light-hearted character seems to be eminently characteristic of the *Morte Arthure*. The ease with which "fifty thousand of folke are felled at ones" when they stand in the way of the victory of the knights; the jovial vein in which Arthur cleaves asunder the giant Colapas, bidding him come down and "karpe to his feris," for that "he is too high by half" to do so comfortably in his giant form; the character of Sir Gawaine, "the gude man of arms," who is so eminent a favourite with the poet because he was "the gladdest of othire,"

"And the hendeste in haule undire hevene riche,"
all testify to this.

And united with this light-hearted vein the least glimpse at the poem will reveal the noble contempt for the probable which it exhibits. Illustration of this is unnecessary, as the whole poem illustrates it. The author might indeed plead that he was not responsible for the "facts;" that he took them from good authority, even from the grave historian, Geoffrey of Monmouth, who has duly chronicled, in choice mediæval Latin,

the adventures of Arthur and his wars with "Sir Lucius." And, truly, few readers of the poem would desire him to have been possessed of a greater critical acumen, and to have set to work to discriminate, select, and weigh probabilities. Better is it to have the original romance in all its richness and raciness, than any amended or more respectable version of the deeds of the "rich king." Arthur is here a "kydd conqueror" throughout; even in his final conflict inflicting poetical justice on the villain Modred, and dying happily among his people, with the nation sorrowing at his tomb. But in this poem, not only is a grand romance given in highly-spirited diction; there are also passages which show a keen appreciation of the beauties of nature, and others which breathe a truly touching pathos. Of the first character especially are the descriptions of the river banks and woodland copse through which Arthur and his knights ride when they go to combat the giant,¹ and of the spot chosen for the midday halt by the party headed by Sir Florent.²

¹ Thane they roode by that ryver, that rynnnyd so swythe,
Thare the ryndez overrechez with realle bowghez;
The roo and the rayne-dere reklesse thare rounene,
In ranez and in rosers to ryotte thame selvene.
All the feulez thare fleschez, that flyez with wengez,
Fore thare galede the gowke one grevez fulle lowde.
Of the nyghtgale notez the noizez was swette,
They threpide with the throstills thre-hundreth at ones!
That whate swowyng of watyr, and syngyng of byrdez,
It myghte salve hyme of sore, that sounde was nevere!

—(ll. 920-932.)

² And in the myste mornyng one a mede falles,
In swathes sweppene downe fulle of swete floures:
Thare unbrydilles theis bolde, and baytes theire horses,
To the gryngyng of the daye, that byrdes gane syng;
Whylles the surs of the sonne, that sonde es of Chryste,
That solaces alle synfulle, that syghte has in erthe.

—(ll. 2506-2512.)

Of the latter, Arthur's beautiful lament over Sir Gawaine,¹ and his touching reflections on his dead knights.² The writer of this romance was assuredly not wanting in the feeling of true poetry, while his vigorous diction and his extraordinary power of heaping epithets upon epithets prove great skill and proficiency in the difficult style of versification which he had adopted. As specimens of this vigour and life we can, perhaps, adduce no better instances than the account of the banquet given to the Romans,³ and of the embarkation of Arthur's army.⁴

¹ Dere kosyne o kynde, in kare am I levede!
For nowe my wirchipe es wente, and my were endide!
Here es the hope of my hele, my happyng of armes!
My concelle, my comforth, that kepide myne herte!
Of alle knyghtes the kyng that undir Criste lifede.
My wele and my wirchipe of alle this werlde riche
Was wonnene thourghe Sir Gawaine, and thourghe his witte one!
—(ll. 3957-3965.)

² Here rystys the riche blude of the rownde table,
Rebukkede with a rebawde, and rewthe es the more!
I may helpes one hethe house be myne one,
Alles a wafulle wedowe that wanttes hir beryne!
I may werye and wepe, and wrynge myne handys,
For my wytt and my wyrchipe awaye es for ever!
Of alle lordchips I take leve to mye ende!
Here es the Bretones blode broughte owt of lyfe,
And nowe in this journee alle my joye endys!
—(ll. 4283-4292.)

³ Pacokes and plovers in platers of golde,
Grett swannes fulle swythe in sylveryne chargeours,
Tartes of Turkey, taste whane thame lykys;
Gumbaldes graythely, fulle gracious to taste;
Bernakes and botures in baterde dysches,
Fesaantes enflureschit in flammande silver,
With darielles endordide, and daynteez ynewe.
—(ll. 182-199.)

⁴ Coggez and crayers, than crossez thaire mastez,
Wyghtly one the wale thay wye up thaire ankers.
Holly with-owttyne harme thay hale in bottes,
Schipe-mene scharply schotene thaire portes,

One of the most prominent marks of the style of this poem is the "stereotyped" epithet: "the rich king," "the kydd conqueror," "faire stedes," "galyard knights," "cruel words," Sir Cadour "the kene," Sir Bedwere "the rich," Sir Gawaine "the good," are constantly recurring. We recognize one of the marked peculiarities of the great father of epic, who wrote of the "swift-footed Achilles," the "glancing-plumed Hector," the "many-murmuring sea," "horse-feeding Argos," and the "long-haired Greeks." The unartificial nature of early poetry allows the constant recurrence of the same ideas. The epithet is rather part of the subject than a predicate, and the main business of the poem being not so much description as narration, there seems a fitness in the hero being constantly kept before our eyes as the possessor of certain attributes, while the great deeds which justify his "style and title" are recorded.

Another noteworthy peculiarity in the poem is the use of the adjective with the demonstrative pronoun without the substantive, *e.g.* "tha steryne," "this sorrowfulle," "that hathelle," "this kene," "that realle." This, which is akin to the Latin use, marks a stage of the language which has long passed away. Of a like character is the idiom common in this poem of putting the objective case of the pronoun before the verb—"þif *me* the life happene," "that *him* over land folowes." Observable also is the constant recurrence of the indefinite expressions "when he likes," "when they like," etc. Not only the stereotyped epithet, but the stereotyped phrase also, occurs regularly in

Launchez lede apone lufe, lacchene ther depez,
Lukkez to the lade-sterne whene the lyghte faillez,
For drede of the derke nyghte thay drecchede a lyttill,
And alle the steryne of the streme strekyne at onez.

—ll. 738-755.)

certain connections, and sometimes gives a highly ludicrous turn to the narrative by its inappropriateness to the sense.

The strong ecclesiastical tone which pervades the poem will not fail to be noticed by any reader. Not only are the dying knights duly attended by a confessor, shriven and comforted with the last Sacraments, but there is observable in several passages a most zealous care against interfering with the goods of the "spirituality." When a grant is made of a city it is only "the temporall" which is granted, and the way in which Arthur is made to say

"I gyffe my protteccione to alle the pope landez,
It is a foly to offende oure fadyr undire Gode,
Owther Peter or Paule tha postles of Rome.
Jiff we spare the spirituelle, we spede bot the bettire,"

sufficiently speaks for itself.

The Editor desires to express his thanks to Mr. R. Morris for his valuable help in preparing the Glossary.

On the rhythm of the alliterative metre a paper has been kindly communicated by the Rev. W. W. Skeat, M.A., of Christ's College, Cambridge, who has made English metre his especial study. This is here subjoined.

It is only needful further to state that one sheet of the poem having been inadvertently sent to the press before the final collation with the manuscript was made, a list of *corrigenda* (most of them unimportant) has to be supplied.

WADDINGTON RECTORY,
September, 1865.

ON THE METRE OF THE POEM.

The metre in which the "Morte Arthure" is written may best be understood by comparing it with "Piers Plowman," the accentuation and *swing* of the verse being much better marked in the last-mentioned poem. The principles which govern this peculiar metre may thus be more readily discerned, and, when once understood, may easily be applied to the present poem.

For a similar reason, it will be the simplest method to consider, first of all, a few lines (of "Piers Plowman") where the metre is most strongly marked, and, afterwards, some where it is, apparently, less regular.

It should first, however, be observed that each complete line in an alliterative poem consists generally of two *sections*, which were separated in old manuscripts by a dot, called the *metrical point* or *pause*, and which may conveniently be denoted by a colon (as in the Prayer Book Version of the Psalms), thus :—

"Schelde us fro schamesdede : and sinfulle werkes ;"

or else by printing the lines thus :—

"Schelde us fro schamesdede,
And sinfulle werkes."

In reading aloud a pause may conveniently be made between the sections.

The two sections form, however, but one complete line ; and, as the metrical point is more necessary when the poem is to be sung or recited than when it is merely to be read, it has not been thought necessary to insert it in this edition, as the reader, when he has once caught the rhythm of the verse, may always be tolerably sure as to where it must occur.

To begin, then ; consider the line—

“In sέtтыnge and sόwynge
Swónken ful hárde.”

—*Piers Plowman* ; ed. Wright, l. 41.

If we use an asterisk to denote a strongly-accented¹ syllable, the figure 1 to denote a *single* unaccented syllable, the figure 2 to mean *two* unaccented syllables immediately succeeding each other, and so on ; we may represent the above line by the scheme,

1 * 2 * 1 : * 2 * 1 ;

and this may be taken as a convenient type of alliterative lines, from which the scansion of véry many others may be readily deduced. Some, however, as will be shewn presently, must be referred to a type somewhat different.

Now, we here observe (1) that each section contains two strong accents ; (2) that, of the strongly-accented syllables, three begin with a common letter, which has been called the *rime-letter* ; and (3) of these three, two occur in the first section, and one in the second. Such is the usual and normal arrangement. The *rime-letters* may be either consonants or vowels, and may consist of *single* letters, or of such combinations as *sc*, *bl*, *tr*, etc. If vowels, it is sufficient that they *are* so ; they need not be the *same* vowels, and, in practice, are generally *different*.

Again, the last strongly-accented syllable in the line does *not* begin with the rime-letter. This also is the usual and more correct arrangement.

Having once this typical form to refer to, it is easy to enumerate most of the changes which may arise. Let us now take the line,

“Hire² méese and hire mátyns,
And mány of hire hóures.”

—*Piers Plowman*, l. 193.

We have here the arrangement

1 * 2 * 1 : 1 * 3 * 1

¹ I use the term *strongly-accented* advisedly, all accents not being equal. Thus, in the line—

“On the óát-grass and the swórd-grass, and the búlrush in the póol,”
the syllables marked are *strongly-accented*.

² “Hire is a monosyllable.”—*Guest on English Rhythms* ; ed. 1838, p. 34.

which shews (1) that an unaccented syllable may be introduced at the beginning of the second section; and (2) that the number of intermediate unaccented syllables may be readily increased to *three*.

Now herein lies the peculiar freedom and elasticity of alliterative verse; we shall soon find by observation that, under certain circumstances, as many as *four* short unaccented syllables (even if they contain among them one that *is* accented *slightly*) may be inserted at pleasure between the emphatic syllables without destroying the rhythm; for it is one addressed to the *ear* only, and not to the *eye*. The chief point which the poet has to take care of is that when he introduces a larger number of unaccented syllables, they should be capable of rapid enunciation, lest the verse seem clogged and unmusical. An example may be seen in the lines,

“Fáiteden for her fóode,
Fóughten at the ále.”

—*Piers Plowman*, l. 83.

Which may be denoted by

* 4 * 1 : * 3 * 1

It would take up too much space to explain here the true method of scanning the lines by division into feet; it may suffice to say that the *general effect* of the metre is *dactylic*, supposing the term *dactyl* to be capable of application to an *English* foot, which, to speak strictly, it is not. Indeed, the nomenclature of English prosody is in sore need of alteration. Neither is there space to explain, and to account for, the curious variations which may further be made in the alliterative metre. The view here given is only an approximate one, which will be found useful in practice. A longer passage may exemplify it better—

“I lóked me on my léft half
As the lády me taúghte,
And was wár of a wóman
Wóρθilich y-clóthed,
Púrfiled with pélure,
The fýnest upon érthe,
Y-córouned with a córoun,
The kýng hath none bétter;
Fétisliche hyr fingres
Were frétted with góld wyr.”

—*Piers Plowman*, l. 892.

<i>Analysis:</i>	1	*	4	*	1	:	2	*	2	*	1
	2	*	2	*	1	:		*	3	*	1
		*	3	*	1	:	1	*	3	*	1
	1	*	4	*	1	:	1	*	2	*	1
		*	3	*	1	:	1	*	2	*	1

One variation, however, found oftenest in the first section, is too important to be passed over. It is that we sometimes find in a section a *third* strongly-accented syllable, thus giving to the line a rather unwieldy length; as in,

"The móoste mischief on móldre
Is móuntynne wel fäste."

—*Piers Plowman*, l. 133.

This third accent is often very awkwardly placed, as in the first line of "Morte Arthure,"

"Now grétt glórious Gódd: thurgh gráce of hym selvene."

Other noticeable deviations from the strict type may be briefly indicated.

(1) The syllable beginning with the rime-letter is sometimes unemphatic; as in "Morte Arthure," l. 59,

"In Glamórgan with glée: thare gládschip was évere."

(2) Sometimes there are but *two* rime-letters, as in l. 80,

"So cóme in sódanly; a sénatour of Róme."

(3) Sometimes there is *no* alliteration, as in l. 70. (4) Sometimes there are *four* rime-letters, as l. 32, where all belong to accented syllables,

"Scáthylle Scóttlande by skýlle: he skýstys as hym lýkys;"

or as in l. 35, where one belongs to an unaccented syllable,

"Hólaund and Hénawde: they héldre of hym bóthe."

It will now be sufficient, perhaps, to indicate what is probably the correct accentuation of the first fourteen lines, as this will enable the reader to perceive in them a certain vigorous *swing* (well suited for the ballad-reciter), which will suggest the scansion of most other lines, though there is always somewhat of difficulty in it, from the fact that we have now-a-days changed the accentuation of many words, and cannot be quite certain about the final *e*'s.

"Now grétt glórious Gódd: thurgh gráce of hym sélvene,
And the précious práyere: of hys prýs móder

Schélde us firo schámesedede : and sýnfulle wérkes,
 And gýffe us gráce to gýfe : and góvarne us hère
 In thys wréchyd wérld : thorowe vért[u]ous lýwyng
 That we may káyre till hys cóurte : the kýngdome of hévyne,
 Whene oure sáules schall pártē : and súnðyre fíra the bódý
 Ewyre to béilde and to býde : in blýsse with hyme sélvene ;
 And wýsse me to wérpe owte : some wórde at this týme,
 That nothyre vóyde be ne váyne : bot wýrchip tille hyme sélvyne ;
 Plésande and prófitabille : to the póple þat theme héres.
 þe that liste has to lýth : or láffes for to hère
 Off élders of álde tyme : and of their áwke dédys,
 Hów they were léle in their láwe : and lóvede Gód Almýghty," etc.

The accentuation of the last two lines is a little doubtful. There may have been an accent on the second *of* in l. 13, owing to its position and the fact of its beginning with a rime-letter; while in l. 14 we have the rather unusual number of six accents, unless "how" was slurred over.

After all, the best way of perceiving the rhythm is to read over some fifty lines several times till they seem quite familiar, and then to read them over once more *out loud*, with strong emphasis on the verbs, substantives, and adjectives, and with a natural and free pronunciation.

CORRIGENDA.

The Roman *e* at the end of the following words should be read *e* Italic:—Falterde, line 1092; schovelle-fotede, 1098; schowande, 1099; yryne, 1105; alle, 1105, 1253, 1310, 1323; ffulle, 1112, 1125, 1346, 1520, 1576; evylle, 1116; wapyne, 1119; harde, 1135; balefulle, 1136; wrythyng, 1141; forfeitede, 1155; howelle, 1180; irene, 1186; christene, 1187; wapene, 1193; whilles, 1197; thare-ine, 1254; wille, 1257; hym-selvene, 1304; mene, 1315; castelles, 1339; lytille, 1423; kyng, 1507; salle, 1511; takyne, 1519; wille, 1556; selfene, 1560; one, 1573; salle, 1575.

To the following words an Italic *e* should be appended:—Kyng, 1106, 1110, 1127, 1263; feyed, 1114; tung, 1250; howsyng, 1284.

In the following words the *n* should be read Italic:—Accountes, 1102; sergeaunt, 1173; presonne, 1632.

In the following the syllable *er* should be read Italic:—Over, 1142; soveraygne, 1167; gleterande, 1280; delyverde, 1548.

In the following the syllable *ur* should be read Italic:—*jour*, 1480; Petur, 1519.

<i>For</i>	skyste,	92, 1643,	<i>read</i>	skyfte.
„	aperty,	212,	„	a party.
„	arouuede,	340,	„	arouuede.
„	knelande,	1137,	„	kneland.
„	Lucius,	1267,	„	Lucius.
„	unfawghte,	1306,	„	unsawghte.
„	be,	1327,	„	bee.
„	salle,	1364,	„	sable.
„	breme,	1380,	„	brene.
„	entters,	1499,	„	enters.
„	heynne,	2436,	„	hepune (?).
„	welle,	2706,	„	welles.
„	dyghte,	3066,	„	nyghte.
„	nyghte,	3267,	„	dyghte.
„	lene,	3350,	„	leve.
„	je at jorka,	3912,	„	jede at joske.

Morte Arthure.

Here begynnes Morte Arthure. In nomine
Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen
pro charite. Amen.

Now grett glorious Godd, thurgh grace of hym selvens,
And the precyous prayere of hys prys modyr,
Schelde us ffro schamesdede and synfulls werkes,

The poet prays
for grace,

4 And gyffe us grace to gye, and governe us here,
In this wrechyd werld, thorowe vertous lywyng,
That we may kayre til hys courte, the kyngdoms of hevyn,
Whens oure saules schalle parte and sundyre ffra the body,

8 Ewyre to belde and to byde in blysse with hym selvens;
And wysse me to werpe owte some worde at this tyme,

That nothyre voyde be ne vayne, bot wyrchip till the hym
selvyne;

and for power to
write something
profitable.

Plesande and profitabill to the pople þat theme heres.

12 þe that liste has to lyth, or luffes for to here,
Off elders of alde tyme and of theire awke dedys,
How they werelele in theire lawe, and lovede God Almyghty,
Herkyne me heyndly and holdys þow styll,

Ye that list to
hear of strange
deeds of old,

16 And I salls telle þow a tale, þat trewe es and nobyll,
Off the ryealle renkys of the rowunde table,
That chefe ware of chevalrye and cheftans nobyll,
Bathe ware in thire werkes and wyse mens of armes,

hearken to a tale
of the Round
Table.

These knights
were noble, wise,
and brave,

kind, and courteous,
and worshipful.

They slew Lucius, lord of Rome, and conquered his kingdom.
Hear now the story.

When King Arthur had won back all the realm of Uther,

Argyle, Orkney,
and the isles

Ireland and Scotland,

Wales, Flanders,
and France,

had made tributary Holland and Hainault, Burgundy and Brabant, Brittany, Guienne, Gothland and Greece.

He built Bayonne and Bordeaux,
Tours and Toul;

was prince of Poitiers and Provence, of Valence and Vienne, of Erugia and Aniana, of Naverne and Norway and Normandy.

Of Germany, of Austria, and many other lands.

He conquered all Denmark with his sword.

Then he dubbed his knights and gave them lands.

Created kings anointed.

Then rested the hero, and held the Round Table.

20 Doughty in their doyns and dredde ay schame,
Kynde men and courtays, and couthe of courte thewes.

How they whanne wyth were wyrchippis many,
Sloughe Lucyus þe lythyre, that lorde was of Rome,
24 And conqueryd that kyngryke thorowe craftys of armes;
Herkenes now hedyrwarde, and herys this storye.

Qwene that the kyng Arthur by conqueste hade wonnynne
Castelles and kyngdoms, and contreez many,

28 And he had coverede the corouns of the kyth ryche
Of alle that Uter in erthe aughte in his tyme,
Orgayle and Orkenay, and alle this owte iles,
Irelande uttirly, as oocyane rynnys;

32 Scathylls Scottlande by skylle he skystys as hym lykys,
And Wales of were he wane at hys wille,
Bathe ffaundrez and ffraunce fre til hym selvyne;
HOLAUND and Henawde they helde of hym bothe,

36 Burgoyne and Brabane, and Bretayne the lesse,
Gyane and Gothelande, and Grece the ryche;
Bayone and Burdeaux he beldytt fulle faire,
Turoyne and Tholus with toures fulle hye;

40 Off Peyters and of Provynce he was prynce holdynne,
Of Valence and Vjenne, off value so noble;
Of Eruge and Anyone, thos erledoms ryche,
By conqueste fulle cruelle þey knewe hym fore lorde;

44 Of Naverne and Norwage, and Normaundye eke,
Of Almayne, of Estriche, and oþer ynowe;
Danmarke he dryssede alle by drede of hym selvyne,
Fra Swynne unto Swether-wyke, with his swrede kene!

48 Qwenne he thes dedes had done, he doubbyd hys knyghtez,
Dyvysyde dowcherys and delte in dyverse remmes;
Mad of his cosyns kyngys ennoyntede,
In kyth there they covaitte crounes to bere.

52 Whene he thys rewmes hade redynne and rewlyde the pople,
Then rystede that ryalle and helde þe Rounde Tabylle;
Suggeourns þat sesone to solace hym selvens,

- In Gretayne þe braddere,¹ as hym beste lykys ;
 56 Sythyns wente into Wales with his wyas alle,
 Sweys into Swaldye with his snelle houndes,
 For to hunt at þe hartes in thas hye laundes,
 In Glamorgane with glee, thare gladchipe was evere ;
 60 And thare a citee he sette, be assente of his lordys,
 That Caerlyone was callid, with curious walles,
 On the riche revare þat rynnys so faire,
 There he myghte semble his sorte to see whenne hym lykyde,
 64 Thane aftyre at Carlelele a Cristynmese he haldes,
 This ilke kyde conquerour, and helde hym for lorde,
 Wyth Dukez and dusperes of dyvers rewmes,
 Erles and erchevesques, and oþer ynowe,
 68 Byschopes and bachelers, and banerettes nobille,
 þat bowes to his banere, buske whens hym lykys :
 Bot on the Cristynmesdaye, whens they were alle semblyde,
 That comlyche conquerour commaundeþ hym selvyne
 72 þat ylke a lorde sulde lenge, and no lefe take,
 To the tende day fully ware takyns to þe ende.
 Thus one ryalls araye he helde his rounde table,
 With semblant and solace and selcouthe metes ;
 76 Whas never syche noblay, in no manys tyme,
 Mad in mydwynter in þa Weste marchys !
Bot on the newȝere daye, at þe none evyne,
 As the bolde at the borde was of brede *servyde*,
 80 So come in sodanly a senatour of Rome,
 Wyth sextens knyghtes in a soyte sewande hym one.
 He saluþed the soverayne and the sale aftyr,
 Ilke a kyngs aftyre kyng,² and mad his enclines ;
 84 Gaynour in hir degre he grette as hym lykyde,
 And syne agayne to þe gome he gaffe up his nedys :
 " Sir Lucius Iberius, the Emperour of Rome,

After solacing
 himself in Bri-
 tain, he goes into
 Wales,
 to hunt the hart
 with his swift
 hounds,
 and in Glamorgan
 founds Caerleon
 upon Usk.

At Caerleon he
 holds high festi-
 val at Christma-
 tide with his lords
 and bishops,

and bids none
 depart from the
 feast till ten days
 are expired.

Never was so
 noble a feast
 known.

But on New
 Year's day, as
 the knights were
 feasting,
 there came in
 suddenly a Sena-
 tor of Rome,
 attended by six-
 teen knights,
 who salutes King
 Arthur and his
 knights,
 and Guinevre the
 Queen,

Then, in the
 name of Sir Lu-

¹ "The More Bretayne Englonð is
 As men may rede on Cronyclys."

—*Arthur* (ed. F. J. Furnivall), l. 503.

² A tag (†) is appended to these g's, which is taken to indicate a final *e*. Halliwell reads it without the *e*.

cus Iberius, the
Emperor of
Rome,

Salu; the as sugett, undyre his sele ryche;
88 It es credens, *syr* kyng, with cruelle wordez,
Trow it for no truffles, his targe es to schewe!
Now in this newjers daye with notaries sygne,
I make the somouns in sale to sue for þi landys,
92 That on Lammesse daye thare be no lette ffoundens,
þat thou bee redy at Rome with alle thi rounde table,
Appere in his presens with thy price knyghtez,
At pryme of the daye, in payne of þour lyvys,

He summons Ar-
thur to appear at
Rome on Lammes
day,

96 In þe kydd capytoile before þe kyng selvyne,
Whene he and his senatours bez sette as them lykes,
To ansuere anely why thow occupyes the laundeze,
That awe homage of alde till he hym and his eldyrs;
100 Why thow has redyne and raymede, and raunsound þe pople,
And kyllde doun his cosyns, kyngys ennoynttyde;
Thare schalle thow gyffe rekkynyng for alle thy round
table,

to answer why
he occupies his
lands instead of
paying homage
to him,

and how he dares
to rebel against
him.

Why thow arte rebelle to Rome, and rentez them
wytholdez!
104 þiff thow theis sommons wythsytt, he sendes thie thies
wordes,

But if Arthur
will not come,
the Emperor will
invade his land
and take him
captive,

He salls the seke over þe see wyth sextens kynges,
Bryne Bretayne þe brade, and bryttyns thy knyghtys,
And bryngs the bouxsomly as a beste with brethe whare
hym lykes,

108 That thow ne schalle rowte ne ryste undyr the hevене
ryche,

and destroy him
wherever he may
fly.

þofe thow for reddour of Rome ryme to þe erthe!
ffor if thow flee into Fraunce or ffreselaund owþer,
þou salls be feched with force, and oversette for ever!

The Register of
Rome declares
that Arthur's fa-
ther paid tribute,
which was won
by Julius Cæsar
and his gentle
knights.
Then did king
Arthur look with
ferocious glance
on the Senator.

112 Thy fadyr mad fewtee, we fynde in oure rollez,
In the regestre of Rome, who so ryghte lukez:
With-owttyne more trouflyng the trebute we aske,
That Julius Cesar wane wyth his jentille knyghttes!"
116 The kyng blyschit one the beryne with his brode eghne,
þat fulls brymly for breth brynte as the gledys;

- Keste colours as kyng with crouelle lates,
 Luked as a lyone, and on his lyppe bytes!
- 120 The Romaynes for radnesse ruschte to þe erthe,
 fforde ferdnesse of hys face, as they fey were;
 Cowchide as kenetez before þe kynges selvyne,
 be-cause of his contenaunce confusede them semente!
- 124 Thene coverd up a knyghte, and criede ful lowde,¹
 "Kynges coronede of kynd, curtays and noble,
 Misdoon no messengere for menske of þi selvyne,
 Sen we are in thy manrede, and mercy þe besekes;
 128 We lenge with *syr* Lucius, that lorde es of Rome,
 That es þe mervelousteste man þat on molde lengez;
 It es lefulle tille us his likynges tille wyrche;²
 We come at his commaundment; have us excusede."
- 132 Then carpys þe conquerour crewelle wordez,—
 "Haa! cravaunde knyghte! a cowarde þe semez!
 þare some segge in this sale, and he ware sare grevede,
 Thow durste noghte fulle alle Lumberdye luke ones hym
 ones."
- 136 "Sir," sais þe Senatour, "so Crist mott me helpe,
 þe voute of thi vesage has woundyde us alle!
 Thow arte þe lordlyeste lede þat ever I one luyde;
 By luynges, with-owt tyne lesse, a lyone the semys!"
- 140 "Thow has me somond," quod þe kyng, "and said what
 þe lykes;³
 Fore sake of thy Soveraynge I suffre the þe more;
 Sen I coround in kyth wyth crysums enoyntede,
 Was never creature to me þat carpede so large!
- 144 Bot I salls tak concelle at kynges enoyntede,
 Off dukes and duspers and doctours noble,
 Offe peres of the perlement, prelates and oþer,
 Off þe richeste renkys of þe rounde table;
- 148 þus schalle I take avisement of valiant beryns,

So terrible was his face that the Romans couched and quailed before him.

Then one of them humbly entreats mercy.

Upon which Arthur upbraids him as a coward.

But the Senator excuses him on the ground that Arthur's visage is very terrible.

The King tells him that he will take counsel of his dukes, doctors, peers, and knights,

¹ *hyghe* in text, erased, and *lowde* written in margin.

² The text has *shewe* which has been erased, and *wyrche* written in the margin.

³ *Likyd* erased and *lykes* written in margin.

- Wyrke afyre the wytte of my wyes knyghttes :
 To warpe wordez in waste no wyrchipp it were,
 Ne wilfully in þis wrethe to wreken~~e~~ my selvene.
- while the Ro- 152 For-þi salle þow lenge here, *and* lugge wyth þise lordes,
 mans stay a week
 to refresh them-
 selves. This sevenyghte in solace, to suggourne þour horses,
 To see whatte lyfe þat wee leede in thees law laundes."
 ffor by þe realtee of Rome, þat recheeste was evere,
- Sir Cayous is bid 156 He commande syr Cayous, take kepe to thoos lordez,
 to entertain the
 lords, To styghtylle þa steryne mene as theire statte askys,
 That they bee herberde in haste in thoos heghe chambres ;
 Sythine sittandly in sale servyde ther-after ;
- and their horses. 160 That they fynd na fawte of fude to thiere horsez,
 Nowthire weyne ne waxe, ne welthe in þis erthe ;
 Spare for no spycerye, bot spende what þe lykys,
 That there be largeste on~~e~~ loftte, and no lake founden~~e~~ ;
- He was not to 164 If þou my wyrchipp wayte wy be my trouthe,
 spare, but to
 feast them liber-
 ally. þou salle have gersoms fulle grett, þat gayne salle þe evere!"
- And right richly 168 **N**ow er they herberde in hey, *and* in oste holdene,
 did they fare. Hastyly wyth hende mene *with-in* thees heghe wallez ;
- Their chambers 168 In chambyrs *with* chymynes þey chaungene þeire wedez,
 were furnished
 with chimneys. And sythyn~~e~~ the chauncelere þeme fetchede *with* chevalrye
 noble ;
- The Senator sat 172 Sone þe senatour was sett, as hym~~e~~ wele semyde,
 at the King's
 table, and was
 served like him-
 self. At þe kynges ownne borde ; twa knyghtes hym *servede*,
 Singulere sothely, as Arthure hym selvyne,
 Richely on þe ryghte haunde at the rounde table ;
- for the Romans 176 Be resoune þat þe Romaynes whare so ryche holdene,
 are of the most
 royal blood on
 earth. As of þe realeste blode þat reynede in erthe.
- Boar's-heads 180 There come in at þe fyrste course, befor þe kyng~~e~~ selvene,
 there were served
 upon silver by
 numerous gaily
 dressed attend-
 ants. Barehevedys þat ware bryghte, burnyste *with* sylver,
 Venison, fatted
 and wild, with
 choice bread, Alle *with* taghte mene and towne in togers fulle ryche,
 Of saunke reall~~e~~ in suyte, sexty at ones ;
- 180 flesch fluriste of fermysone *with* frumentee noble
 Ther-to wylde to wale, and wynlyche bryddes,¹

¹ *bredes* erased and *bryddes* written in margin.

- Pacockes and plovers in platers of golde,
 Pygges of porke despyne, *pat* pastureded never ;
- 184 Sythene herons in hedoyne, hyled fulle faire ;
 Grett swannes fulle swythe in silveryne chargeours,
 Tartes of Turkey, taste whane þeme lykys ;
 Gumbaldes graythely, fulle gracious to taste ;
- 188 Seyne bowes of wylde bores with þe braune lechyde,
 Bernakes and botures in baterde dysches,
 þareby braunchers in brede bettyr was never,
 With brestez of barowes, *pat* bryghte ware to schewe,
- 192 Seyne come þer sewes sere, with solace þer-after,
 Ownd of azure alle over and ardent þem semyde,
 Of ilke aleche þe lowe launschide fulle hye,
pat alle ledes myghte lyke *pat* lukyde þeme apone ;
- 196 þane cranes and curlues craftyly roasted,
 Connygez in cretoyne colourede fulle faire,
 fesauntez enflureschit in flammande silver,
 With darielles endordide, and daynteez ynewe ;
- 200 þane clarett and Creette, clergyally rennene,
 With condethes fulle curious alle of clene silvyre ;
 Osay and algarde, and oþer ynewe,
 Rynisch wyne and Rochelle, richere was never ;
- 204 Vernage of Venyce vertuouse and Crete ;
 In faucetez of fyn golde, fonode whoso lykys ;
 The kynggez cope-borde was closed in silver,
 In grete goblettez overgylte glorious of hewe ;
- 208 There was a cheeffe buttlere, a chevalere noble,
 Sir Cayous þe curtaise, *pat* of þe cowpe servede ;
 Sixty cowpes of suyte offore the kyng selvyne,
 Crafty and curious corvens fulle faire,
- 212 In ever-ilk aperty pyghte with precyous stones,
 That nane enpoysons sulde goo praveley þer undyre,
 Bot þe bryght golde for brethe sulde briste alto peces,
 Or ells þe venyme sulde voyde thurghe vertue of þe stones,
- 216 And the conquerour hymselfene, so clenly arayed
 In colours of clene golde, cleede wyth his knyghttys,
- peacocks and plovers upon golden plates,
 sucking pigs,
 herons in sauce,
 huge swans,
 tarts and conserves,
- hams and brawn in slices,
 wild geese and ducks,
 young hawks,
- various stews and made dishes
 ornamented brightly,
- Cranes and curlews roasted,
 rabbits served in sweet sauce,
 pheasants upon silver,
 curries made to shine bright, and numerous other dainties.
 Wine caused to run skilfully in silver conduits.
- Rare sorts served in cups of fine gold.
 The King's cupboard was glorious with plate.
- The chief butler was Sir Cayous,
- who served the wine in goblets decked with precious stones,
 which hinder the deadly effects of poison.
- Arthur was clad in cloth of gold

with his crown
on; the doughti-
est knight that
dwelt on earth.

Then he spake 220
courteous words
to those lords.

"Sirs, be of good
cheer, we give
you the best our
barren country
afforde, which in-
deed is but
poor."

"Sir," says the
Senator, "Rome
itself can show
nothing equal to
this luxurious
feast."

Then they wash-
ed and withdrew
to the chamber.

Sir Gawaine leads
Guinevere.

Spiced drinks
were served to
all.

Certain lords
were assigned to
attend upon the
Senator.

Arthur goes to
council in the
Giant's tower,

with his lords,
justices, judges,
and gentle
knights.

First speaks Sir
Cador of Corn-
wall.

The letters of Sir
Lucius, he says,
delight his heart.

Drissid with his dyademe one his deesse ryche,
fore he was demyde þe doughtyeste þat duellyde in erthe.

Thane þe conquerour kyndly carpede to þose lordes,
Rehetede þe Romaines with realle speche,

"Sirs, bez knyghtly of contenance, and comfurthes
yourselvynes,

We knowe noghte in þis counstre of curious metez;

224 In thees barayne landez, bredes nons oþer,
fore-thy wythowttyne feynnyng, enforce þow þe more
To feede þow with syche feble as þe be-fore fynde."

"Sir," sais þe Senatour, "so Criste motte me helpe!

228 There rygnede never syche realtee with-in Rome walles!
There ne es prelatte ne pape, ne prynce in þis erthe,
That ne he myghte be wele payede of þees pryce metes!"

A ftyre theyre welthe þey wesche, and went un-to
chambyre,

232 Þis ilke kydde conquerour with knyghtes ynewe;
Sir Gaywayne þe worthy Dame Waynour he hledys;
Sir Owghtreth on þe toþer syde of Turry was lorde.

Thane spyces unsparly þay spendyde there-aftre,
236 Malvesye and muskadelle, þase mervelyous drynkes,
Raykede fullø raythely in rossete cowpes,
Tille alle þe riche on rawe, Romaines and oþer.

Bot the soveraigne sothely, for solauce of hym selvens,
240 Assignyde to þe senatour certaygne lordes,
To lede to his levere, whene he leve askes,
With myrthe and with melodye of mynstralsy noble.

Thane þe conquerour to concelle cayres there aftre,
244 Wyth lordes of his lygeaunce þat to hymselfe langys;
To þe geauntes toure jolily he wendes,
Wyth justicez and juggez, and gentillø knyghtes.

Sir Cador of Cornewayle to þe kyngs carppes,

248 Lughe one hymø luffly with lykande lates;

"I thanke Gode of þat thraa þat us þus thretys!

þow moste be traylede, I trowe, bot þife þe trett bettyre:
þe lottres of syr Lucius lyghttys myne herte!

- 252 We hafe as losels liffyde many longe daye,
 Wyth delytttes in this land with lordchipez many,
 And forelytenede the loos þat we are layttede :
 I was abaischite, be oure Lorde, of oure beste bernes,
- 256 Fore gret dule of deffuse of dedez of armes !
 Now wakkenyse þe were ! wyrchipide be Cryste !
 And wesallewynne it agayne be wyghtnesse and strenghe !"
 " Sir Cador," *quod* þe kyng, " thy concelle es noble,
- 260 Bot þou arte a *mervailous* mane with thi mery wordez !
 ffor thow countez no caas, ne castes no forthire,
 Bot hurles furthe appone hevede, as thi herte thynkes ;
 I moste trette of a trew towchande þise nedes,
- 264 Talke of thies tythdands þat tenes myne herte ;
 þou sees þat þe Emperour es angerde a lyttill ;
 þat semes be his sandismene þat he es sore grevede ;
 His senatour has sommonde me, and said what hym lykyde,
- 268 Hethely in my halle, wyth heynous wordes,
 In speche dissypsyede me, and sparede me lyttill ;
 I myght noghte speke for spytte, so my herte trymblyde !
 He askyde me tyrauntly tribute of Rome,
- 272 That tenefully tynt was in tyme of myne elders ;
 There alyenes, in absence of alle mene of armes,
 Coverd it of commons, as cronicles telles ;
 I have tide to take tribute of Rome,
- 276 Myne ancestres ware emperours, and aughte it þeme selvens,
 Belyne and Bremyne, and Bawdewyne the thyrd,
 They occupyede þe empyre aughte score wynnttyrs,
 Ilkane ayere aftyre oþer, as awlde mene telles ;
- 280 Thei coverde þe capitoile, and keste doun þe walles ;
 Hyngede of þeire heddys-mene by hundrethes at ones ;
 Seyne Constantyne, our kynsmane, conquerid it aftyre,
 þat ayere was of Ynglande, and Emperour of Rome,¹

They had too long
 lived a life of
 inglorious peace.

He rejoices to
 return again to
 deeds of arms.

The king praises
 Sir Cador for his
 bold words,

spoken from his
 heart without
 thought or care.

He himself is
 grieved at these
 tidings.

he has been in-
 sulted in his own
 hall by heinous
 words,

and insolently
 summoned to
 pay tribute to
 the Emperor of
 Rome,

of whom he ought
 rather to demand
 tribute.

His ancestors oc-
 cupied the Em-
 pire of Rome
 eight score win-
 ters.

His kinsman,
 Constantine,
 afterwards sub-
 dued it—

¹ "For the Emperor Constantine
 That was the son of Elyne
 That was a Breton of this lond,
 Conquered Rome with his hond."

—*Arthur* (ed. F. J. Furnivall), l. 249.

he who gained
by conquest the
true Cross.

284 He *þat* conquerid *þe* Crosse be crafter of armes,
That Criste was on crucifiede, *þat* kyng es of hevene;
Thus hafe we evydens to aske *þe* Emperour *þe* same,
That þus regnez at Rome, whate ryghte *þat* he claymes."

Then answered
King Aungers
and said that Ar-
thur ought to be
supreme over all
kings.

288 **T**han¹ answarde kyng Aungers to Arthure hym selvyne,
"Thow aughte to be overlynge over alle oþer kynges,
ffore wyseste, and worthyeste, and wyghteste of haundes,
The knyghtlyeste of counsaile *þat* ever corone bare;

The Romans had
done many evil
deeds in Scot-
land,

292 I dare saye fore Scottlande, *þat* we theme schathe lympe,
Whene the Romaynes regnede, þay raunsounds oure eldyrs,
And rade in theire ryotte, and ravyschett oure wyfes,
With-owttyns resone or ryghte reft us oure gudes;

for which he
would have re-
venge.

296 And I salle make myne avowe devotly to Criste,
And to *þe* haly vernacle vertuus and noble,
Of this grett velany I salle be vengede ones
On þone venemus mene, wyth valiant knyghtes!

He promises to
bring 50,000 men
to aid Arthur.

300 I salle the forthire of defence fosterde ynewe
fifty thowsande mene, wyth-in two eldes,
Of my wage for to wende, whare so the lykes,
To fyghte wyth thy ffaa mene, *þat* us unfaire ledes."

The Baron of
little Britain
would have Ar-
thur return a
fierce answer.

304 **T**hane the burelyche beryne of Bretayne *þe* lyttlyl
Counsayles *syr* Arthure, and of hyme besekys
To ansuere *þe* alyenes wyth austerene wordes,
To entyce the Emperour to take overe the mounttes.

He fears the Ro-
mans no whit.

308 He said, "I make myne avowe verreilly to Cryste,
And to *þe* haly vernacle, *þat* voide schalle I nevere,
ffor radnesse of na Romayne *þat* regnes in erthe;
Bot ay be redye in araye, and at areste ffoundene,

312 No more dowte the dynte of theire derfe wapyns,
þan *þe* dewe *þat* es dannke, whene *þat* it douns ffallis;
Ne no more schoone fore *þe* swape of theire scharpe
suerddes,

Then fore *þe* faireste flour patt on the folde growes!

He promises to
bring 30,000

316 I salle to batelle the brynge, of brenyede knyghtes
Thyrty thosaunde be tale, thyrftyte in armes,

¹ *Yan* in MS.

- Wyth-in a monethe daye in-to whatte marche,
 þat þow wylle sothelye assygne, whens thyselfe lykys.”
- 320 “A! A!” sais þe Walsche kyng, “wirchipid be Criste!
 Now schalle we wreke fulls wele þe wrethe of oure elders!
 In West Walys i-wysse syche woundyrs þay wroghte,
 þat alle for wandrethe may wepe, þat one þat were thynkes.
- 324 I salls have the avantwarde wytterly my selvens,
 Tylle þat I have venquiste þe Vicounte of Rome,
 þat wroghte me at Viterbe a velanye ones,
 As I paste in pylgremage by the Pounte Tremble;
- 328 He was in Tuskayne þat tyme and tuke of oure knyghttes,
 Areste theme oonryghttwyslye, and raunsound þame aftyre;
 I salls hym surelye ensure, þat saghetylle salls we never,
 Are we sadlye assemble by oure selfens ones,
- 332 And dele dynttys of dethe with oure derfe wapyns!
 And I salls wagge to þat were of wyrchipfulls knyghtes,
 Of Wyghte and of Walschelande, and of þe Weste marches,
 Twa thosande in tale, horsede one stedys,
- 336 of þe wyghteste wyes in alle þone Weste landys!”
- Syre Ewane fytz Uryenee þane egerly fraynez,
 Was cosyne to þe conquerour, corageous hym selfens,
 “Sir, and we wyste þour wylle, we walde wirke þer-aftyre;
 340 ȝif þis journee sulde halde, or be arouwede¹ forthyre,
 To ryde one þone Romaynes and ryott theire landez,
 We walde schape us there-fore to schippe whene þow
 lykys.”
- “Cosyne,” quod þe conquerour, “kyndly þow asches;
 344 ȝife my concelle accorde to conquere þone landez,
 By the kalendez of Juny we schalle encountre ones,
 Wyth fulls creuelle knyghtez, so Cryste mot me helpe!
 There-to make I myne avowe devottly to Cryste,
- 348 And to the holy vernacle vertuous and noble,
 I salls at Lammesse take leve, to lenge at my large
 In Loraune or Lumberdye, whethire me leve thynkys;

knyghts within a month.

Then Arthur exclaims Ah! Ah! Now shall we have revenge.

He himself would fight at the head of his army till he had revenged himself on the Viscount of Rome for a villainy he once wrought him at Viterbo.

He would take two thousand picked knights.

Then spoke Sir Ewayne and said that they would all follow his command gladly.

Then said Arthur,

“We will be ready by the kalends of June,

and at Lammass will enjoy ourselves in Lorraine or Lombardy.

¹ The reading of this word is somewhat doubtful. Halliwell reads *aprovede*, but there is certainly no trace of a *p* in the MS.

- Merke un-to Meloyne, and myne dounne þe wallez,
 352 Bathe of Petyrsande, *and* of Pys, and of þe Pounte Trëble,
 In þe Vale of Viterbe vetaile my knyghttes,
 Suggourne there sex wokes *and* solace my-selfens;
 Send prekers to þe price tounne, and plaunte there my segge,
 356 Bot if þay profre me þe pece be processe of tyme."
 "Certys," sais *syr* Ewayne, "and I avowe aftyre,
 And I þat hathelle may see ever with myne eghne,
 That ocupies thine heritage, the empyere of Rome,
 360 I salle auntyre me anes hys egle to touche,
 þat borne es in his banere of brighte golde ryche,
 And raas it frome his riche mene, and ryste it in sondyre,
 Bot he be redily reschowede with riotous knyghtez;
 364 I salle enforsse þowe in þe felde with fresche mene of armes,
 ffyfty thosande folke apone faire stedys,
 On thi ffoo mene to foonde there the faire thynkes,
 In ffraunce *or* in ffriselande, feghte whene þe lykes!"
 368 "By oure Lorde," *quod* *syr* Launcelott, now lyghttys
 myne herte!
 I love Gode of þis love þis lordes has avowede!
 Nowe may lesse mene have leve to say what theme lykes,
 And hase no lettyng be lawe, bot lystynnys þise wordez;
 372 I salle be at journee with gentille knyghtes,
 On a ramby stede fulle jolyly graythide,
 Or any journee begane to juste with hym selfens,
 Emange alle his geauntez genyvers and oþer,
 376 Stryke hym styfflye fro his stede, with strenghe of myne
 handys,
 ffor alle þa steryne in stour, þat in his stale hovys!
 Be my retenu arayed, I rekke bot a lyttill
 To make rowtte into Rome, with ryotous knyghtes!
 380 With-in a sevenyghte daye, with sex score helmes,
 I salle be seene on the see, saile when þe lykes."
 Thane laughs *syr* Lottez, and alle one lowde meles,
 "Me likez þat *syr* Lucius launges aftyre sorowe;
 384 Now he wylnez þe were, hys wandrethe begynnys,

Sojourn six
weeks in the
Vale of Viterbo,

and advance skir-
mishers to Rome
unless they offer
peace in fitting
time."
Then Sir Ewayne
vows vengeance
against the Em-
peror of Rome
for occupying Ar-
thur's heritage,

and promises
50,000 men on
fair steeds.

Then Lancelot
declares his satis-
faction at the
war.

He is ready to
joust with the
Emperor him-
self,

and to carry the
war into Rome.

Sir Lotz laughs
for joy,

- It es owre weredes to wreke the wrethe of oure elders !
 I make myne avowe to Gode, and to þe holy vernacle,
 And I may se þe Romaynes, þat are so ryche haldene,
 388 Arayed in þeire riotes on a rounde felde,
 I salls at þe reverence of þe rounde table
 Ryde throughte alle þe rowtte, rerewarde and cþer,
 Redy wayes to make, and renkkes fulls rowme,
 392 Rynnande on rede blode, as my stede ruschez !
 He þat folowes my fare, and fyrste comes aftyre,
 Salls fynde in my fare waye many ffay levyde !"
 Thane þe conquerour kyndly comforthes þese knyghtes,
 396 Alowes þame gretly theire lordly a-vowes,—
 "Alweldande Gode, wyrchip þow alle !
 And latte me nevere wantte þow, whylls I in werlde regne ;
 My menske and my manhede þe mayntene in erthe,
 400 Myne honour alle owt utterly in oþer kyngys landes ;
 My wele and my wyrchipe, of alle þis werlde ryche,
 þe have knyghtly conqueryde, þat to my coroune langes ;
 Hym thare be ferde for no faees, þat swylke a folke ledes,
 404 Bot ever ffresche for to fyghte, in felde whene hym lykes.
 I acounte no kyng þat undyr Criste lyffes,
 Whilles I see þowe alle sounde, I sette be no more."
 Qwhene they tristily had tetryd, thay trumppeþ up
 aftyre,
 408 Descendyd doune with a daunce of dukes and erles ;
 Thane þey semblede to sale, and sowpped als swythe,
 Alle þis semly sorte, wyth semblante fulls noble.
 Thene the roy realls rehetes thes knyghttys,
 412 Wyth reverence and ryotte of alle his rounde table,
 Tille seven dayes was gone : þe senatour askes
 Answer to þe Emperour with austeryne wordez,
 Aftyre þe Epiphanye, whene þe purpos was takyne
 416 Of peris of þe parlement, prelates and oþer.
 The kyng in his concelle, curtaise and noblee,
 Utters þe alienes, and ansuers hym selvens :—
 "Gret wele Lucius, thi lorda, and layne noghte þise wordes ;

and hopes to see
the rich Romans
in their pomp,

that he may cut
his way through
them and shed
their blood.

Then Arthur
praises his
knights for up-
holding his
honour.

While they re-
main true to him
he fears no king
on earth.
Then the Council
broke up.

Music and
dancing suc-
ceeded,

and they all were
feasted in the
hall.

After seven days
the Senator de-
mands his answer
for the Emperor.

Then Arthur bids
him greet Lucius

- and tell him that 420 Ife þow be lygmane lele, late hym̃ wiet sone
he shall quickly
see him in his
country;
- that he will hold 424 By þe reyvere of Reone halde my rounde table,
his round table
by the river
Rhone,
- and mine down 428 To Meloyne the mervaylous, and myne douñ the walles;
the walls of
Milan,
- ravage Tuscany
with his fierce
knights, 432 Ryde alle þas rowme landes wyth ryotous knyghttes;
Byde hy[m] make reschewes for menske of hym̃ selvens,
And mette me fore his manhede in þase mayne landes!
I sall̃ be foundyñ in Fraunce, fraiste whene hym lykes,
- 436 The fyrste daye of fever̃ere, in thas faire marches!
Are I be fechyde wyth force, or forfeite my landes,
þe floure of his faire folke fulle fay sall̃ be levyde!
I sall̃ hym sekyrly ensure, undyre my seele ryche,
- and before seven 440 To seege þe cetee of Rome wyth in seveñ wyntyre,
winters are gone
besiege Rome,
- and many a sen-
ator shall rue his
wrath. - My sommons er certified, and þow arte fulle servyde
- The messenger 444 Of cundit and credense, kayre whene the lykes:
may depart as
soon as he
pleases.
- He must travel
to Sandwich in
seven days, 448 Sexty myle on a daye, þe somme es bott lyttille!
Thowe moste spede at the spurs, and spare noghte thi fole,
Thowe weynde by Watlyng-strette, and by no waye ells:
Thare thow nyghttes one nyghte, nede moste þou lenge,
- going by Wat-
ling-street,
stopping at night
wherever he may
chance to be,
tying his horse
to a bush by the
bridle. 452 Be it foreste or felde, found þou no forthire;
Bynde thy blonke by a buske with thy brydille eveñe,
Lugge þi-selfe undyre lynde, as þe leafe thynkes,

- There awes none alyenes to ayere appone nyghttys,
 456 With syche a rebawdous rowtte to ryot thy selvens.
 Thy lycence es lemete in *presence* of lordys,
 Be now lathe or lette, ryghte as þe thynkes,
 For bothe þi lyffe and thi lyme lygges þer appone,
 460 Þose *syr* Lucius had laide þe lordchipe of Rome ;
 ffor be þow foundene a fute with-owte þe flode merkes,
 Aftyr þe aughtende day, whens undroune es rungene,
 þou salls be hevedede in hye, and with horsse drawene,
 464 And seyne heyly be hangede, houndes to gnawene !
 The rente ne rede golde, þat un-to Rome langes,
 Salle y noghte redily renke, raunsons thyns one !"
 "Sir," sais the senatour, "so Crist mot me helpe !
 468 Might I with wirchip wyne awaye ones,
 I sulde never fore emperour, þat on erthe lenges,
 Ofte unto Arthure ayere ons syche nedys ;
 Bot I am sengilly here, with sex sum of knyghtes ;
 472 I be-seke þow, *syr*, that we may sounde passe :
 If any unlawefulle lede lette us by þe waye,
 With-in thy lycence, lorde, thy loosse es enpeyrede."
 "Care noghte," *quod* the kyng, "thy coundyte es knawene
 476 ffor Carlelele to þe coste, there thy cogge lengges ;
 þoghe thy cofers ware fulle, cramede with sylver,
 Thow myghte be sekyre of my sele sixty myle forthire."
 They enclined to þe kyng, and counge þay askede,
 480 Cayers owtt of Carelele, *catchez* ons theire horsez ;
 Sir Cadore þe curtayes kende theme the wayes,
 To Catrike þeme cunvayede, and to Crist þeme be-kennyde.
 So þey spede at þe spoures, þey sprangene þeire horses,
 484 Hyres þeme hakenayes hastyly þere aftyre ;
 So fore reddour þey redene, and risted theme never,
 Bot þif they luggede undire lynd, whills þeme lyghte failede ;
 Bot evere þe senatour for-sothe soghte at þe gayneste,
 488 By þe sevende day was gone þe cetee þai rechide ;
 Of alle þe glee undire Gode so glade ware þey nevere,
 As of þe sounde of þe see and Sandwyche belles !

If after the evening of the eighth day he is found in the country, he shall be hanged up for dogs to eat.

Then the Senator declares that if he can only get well away once, he would never again go on such an errand.

He prays that his retinue may be protected on their way.

Then Arthur tells him that if his coffers were crammed full of silver he would be safe with his passport.

Then did the Romans depart with all speed,

and never rested till they had reached Sandwich by the time prescribed.

Never were they as glad of any thing as of the sound of the sea and Sandwich bells.

Wythowttyne more stowuntynge they schippide þeire
horsez,

492 Wery to þe wane see þey went alle att ones ;
With þe mene of þe walle they weyde up þeire ankys,
And fiede at þe fore flude, in Flaundrez þey rowede,
And thorughe Flaundres þey founde, as þeme faire thoghte,¹

They crossed the
sea to Flanders,

496 Tille Akyne in Almayne, in Arthur landes ;
Gosse by þe Mount Goddarde fulls grevous wayes,
And so in-to Lumberddye lykande to schewe ;
They turne thurghe Tuskayne, with towres fulls heghe,

and over Mount
St. Gothard into
Lombardy,

through Tuscany
to Rome.

500 In pris appairelles theme in precious wedez ;
The sevendaye in suters þay suggourne þeire horsez,
And sekis þe Seyntez of Rome, be assente of knyghtes ;
Sythynne prekes to þe pales with portes so ryche,
504 þare syr Lucius lenges with lordes enowe ;
Lowttes to hym lufly, and lettres hym bedes
Of credence enclosyde, with knyghtlyche wordes.

Then the Senator
seeks an audience
with the Emperor
Lucius.

Who asks eagerly
for Arthur's an-
swer, and on what
ground he resists
the power of
Rome.

Thene the emperour was egree, and enkerly fraynes
508 þe answeere of Arthure ; he askes hym sone
How he arayes þe rewme, and rewlys þe pople ;
ȝif he be rebelle to Rome, whate ryghte þat he claymes :

His ambassador
ought to have
seized his sceptre
and sat above
him.

Arthur, he says,
ought himself to
have served the
Senator.

Then answers the
Senator, that Ar-
thur is too great
to do that for
anyone.

“Thow sulde his ceptre have sesede, and syttyne abounne,
512 ffor reverence and realtee of Rome þe noble :
By sertes þow was my sandes, and senatour of Rome,
He sulde fore solempnitee hafe servede þe hym selvene.”

“That wille he never for no waye of alle þis werlde ryche,
516 Bot who may wynne hym of werre, by wyghtnesse
of handes ;²

Many fey schalle be fyrste appone þe felde levyde,
Are he appere in this place, profre whene þe likes :
I saye the syr Arthure es thynne enmye fore ever,
And ettelles to bee overlynge of þe empyre of Rome,
That alle his ancestres aughte, bot Utere hym-selfe.

He claims no less
than the Empire
of Rome.

¹ *lykyd* written first in MS. but erased and *thoghte* written in margin by same hand.

² In the short romance of Arthur, the Senator is still more plain-spoken,

“His worthiness, Sir Emperor,
Passes much all youre.”—l. 286.

- T**hy nedes this newe þere, I notifiede my-selfene,
 Be-fore þat noble of name and neyvesome of kynges;
- 524 In the moste reale place of þe rounde table,
 I somounde hyme solempnylye, one secande his knyghtez;
 Senȝ I was formyde in faythe so ferde was I nevere,
 In alle þe placez ther I passede of prynce in erthe!
- 528 I wolde fore-sake alle my suyte of segnoury of Rome,
 Or I este to þat soveraygne whare sente one suyche nedes!
 He may be chosynȝ cheftayne, cheefe of alle ȝer,
 Bathe be chaunce of armes and chevallrye noble,
- 532 ffor whyeseste and worthyeste, and wyghteste of haundeȝ:
 Of alle the wyȝe þate I wate in this werlde ryche,
 The knyghtlyeste creatoure in Cristyndome haldene,
 Of kyngȝ or of conquerour, crownde in erthe,
- 536 Of countenaunce of corage, of crewelle lates,
 The comlyeste of knyghtehode þat undyre Cryste lyffes!
 He maye be spokene in dyspens, despyserȝ of sylvere,
 That no more of golde gyffes þane of grette stones,
- 540 No more of wyne þane of watyre, that of þe welle rynnys,
 Ne of welthe of þ[i]s werlde bot wyrchipe allone.
 Syche contaunce was never knowene in no kythe ryche,
 As was with þat counquerour in his courte haldene;
- 544 I countede at this Crystynmesse, of kyngȝ enoyntede,
 Hole tens at his table, þat tyme with hyme selfene;
 He wyllȝ werraye i-wysse, be-ware if þe lykes,
 Wage many wyghtemene, and wache thy marches,
- 548 That they be redye in araye, and at areste foundyne;
 ffor ifȝe he reche un-to Rome, he raunsouns it for evere!
 I rede þow drete the þer-fore, and drawe no lytte langere,
 To sekyre of þi sowdeours, and send to þe mowntes;
- 552 Be þe quartere of this þere, and hym quarte staunde,
 He wyllȝ wyghtlye in a qwhyte one his wayes hye.”
- “**B**ee Estyre,” sais þe Emperour, “I ettylle my selfene,
 To hostaye in Almayne with armede knyghtez;
- 556 Sende freklye into Fraunce, þat flour es of rewmes,
 ffande to fette þat freke, and forfette his landez;

He tells the Emperor how he had delivered his message, and that he was never so frightened since he was born.

Arthur is worthy to be king of men for his wisdom and valour.

He is the most famous knight in Christendom.

To him gold and silver are as nothing,

and wine no more than water.

Ten kings anointed feast at his table.

God need is there of zealous preparation,

and that soldiers should be dispatched to the mountains forthwith.

“By Easter,” says the Emperor, “I undertake to be in Germany with an army,

and will send
many giants and
mighty men to
meet him in the
mountains.

A post shall be
occupied on
Mount St. Goth-
ard, with a beacon
ready to light,

and another on
Mount St. Ber-
nard.

He shall not be
suffered to enter
Pavia."

Then Lucius
sends letters into
the East,

to demand aid of
all the kings and
lords.
Quickly they all
came, for fear of
his might.

All that failed
were to forfeit
their lands.

- ffor I salle sette keepers, fulls covaunde *and* noble,
Many geaunte of geene, justers fulls gude,
560 To mete hym in the mountes, *and* martyre hys knyghtes,
Stryke þeme doun in strates, and struye theme fore *evere*,
There salle appone Godarde a garette be rerede,
That schalle be garneschte *and* kepyde with gude mene of
armes,
564 And a bekyns abovene to brynne whene þeme lykys,
þat nane enmye with hoste salle entre the mountes ;
There schalle one mounte Bernarde be beyldede *anopere*,
Buschede with banerettes and bachelers noble :
568 In at the portes of Pavye schalle no prynce passe,
Thurgh the perelous places, for my pris knyghtes."
Thane *syr* Lucius lordlyche *lettres* he sendys
Onone in-to þe Oryente, with austeryne knyghtes,
572 Tille Ambyganye and Orcage, and Alysaundyre eke,
To Inde and to Ermonyne, as Ewfrates rynnys,
To Asye, and to Affrike, and Ewrope þe large,
To Irritayne and Elamet, and alle þase owte ilez ;
576 To Arraby and Egipt, tille erles and *oper*,
That any erthe occupyes in þase Este marches ;
Of Damaske and Damyat, and dukes and erles,
ffor drede of his daungere they dresside þeme sone ;
580 Of Crete and of Capados the honourable kyngys
Come at his commandmente, clenly at ones ;
To Tartary *and* Turkey, whene tythynggez es comene,
They turne in by Thebay terauntez fulls hugge,
584 The flour of þe faire folke, of Amazonnes landes ;
Alle thate ffailliez on þe felde be forfette fore *evere* !
Of Babyloyns and Baldake the burlyche knyghtes,
Bayous with þeire baronage bydez no langere ;
588 Of Perce and of Pamphile, and Preter Johnne landes,
Iche prynce with his powere appertlyche graythede ;
The Sowdane of Surrye assemblez his knyghtes,
ffra Nylus to Nazareth, nommers fulls huge ;
592 To Garyere *and* to Galelé þey gedyre alle at ones ;

The Sowdanes that ware sekýre sowdeours to Rome,
 They gadyrede overe þe Grekkes see with grevous wapyns,
 In theire grete galays, wyth gleterande scheldez ;

From all the East
 they came sailing
 across the Greek
 Sea in their
 mighty ships
 armed for war,

596 The kynge of Cyprys one þe see þe Sowdane habydes,
 With alle the realles of Roodes, arayed with hyme one :
 They sailede with a syde wynde ovre þe salte strandez :
 Sodaynly þe Sarezenes, as them selfe lykede,

600 Craftyly at Cornett the kynges are aryese,de,
 fra þe ceté of Rome sexti myle large :

and assembled at
 Civita, sixty miles
 from Rome.

Be that the Grekes ware graythede, a fullé gret nombýre,
 The myghtyeste of Macedone, with mené of þa marches,

There were of
 Grekes a vast
 number, and men
 of Italy, with
 Saracens from
 many lands.

604 Pulle and Pruysslande presses with oþer,
 The lege-mene of Lettow with legyons ynewe :
 Thus they semble in sortes, summes fullé huge,
 Sowdanes and Sarezenes owt of sere landes,

608 The Sowdane of Surry and sextene kynges,
 At the cetes of Rome assemblede at ones.

Thane yschewes þe Emperour armede at ryghtys,
 Arayed with his Romaynes appone ryche stedys ;

Then goes forth
 the Emperour with
 his knights.

612 Sixty geauntes be-fore engenderide with fendez,
 With weches and warlawes to wacchene his tentys ;
 Ay-ware whare he wendes, wyntrez and þeres.
 Myghte no blonkes theme bere, thos bustows churles,

Sixty giants born
 of fiends, and
 witches and war-
 locks precede
 him.

616 Bot coverde camellez of toures, enclosyde in maylez ;
 He ayerez oute with alyenez osten fullé huge,
 Ewyne in-to Almayne, þat Arthure hade wonnyne ;
 Rydes in by þe ryvere, and ryottez hyme selvene,

Riding upon
 camels bearing
 towers,

620 And ayeres with a huge wyllé alle þas hye landez ;
 Alle Westwale of werre he wynnys as hym lykes,
 Drawes in by Danuby, and dubbez hys knyghtez ;
 In the contré of Colome castelles ensegegez,

he marches into
 Germany, and
 lays it waste.

624 And suggeournez þat sesone wyth Sarazenes ynewe.

At the utas of Hillary, Syr Arthure hym-selvene
 In his kyddé counsellé commande þe lordes,—

Meanwhile Ar-
 thur commands
 his knights to
 gather their
 forces, and to be
 ready to meet
 him.

“ Kayere to þour cuntrez, and semble þour knyghtes,
 628 And kepys me at Constantyne clenlyche arayed ;

Byddez me at Garefflete apone þa blythe stremes,
 Baldly *with-in* borde *with* þowre beste beryns;
 I schallø menskfully þowe mete in thos faire marches.”

The fleet assem-
 bles at Sandwich.

632 He sendez furthe sodaynly *sergeantes* of armes,
 To alle hys mariners on rawe, to areste hym schippys;
 Wyth-in sextenø dayes hys fleet whas assemblede,
 At Sandewyche on þe see, saile whenø hym lykes.

He holds a Par-
 liament at Yorke,

636 In the palez of þorke a perlement he haldez,
 With alle þe perez of þe rewme, *prelates* and *oper*;
 And aftyre þe *prechyng* in *presence* of lordes,
 The kyng in his concelle carpys þes wordes,—

640 “I am in *purpos* to passe *perilous* wayes,
 To kaire *with* my kene mene, to conquere þone landes,
 To owtraye myne enmy, *if* aventure it schewe,
 That ocupyes myne heritage, þe empyre of Rome.

and appoints as
 Viceroy Sir Mor-
 dred, his nephew.

644 I sett þow here a *soveraynge*, ascente *if* þowe lykys,
 That es me sybb, my *syster* sone, Sir Mordrede hym selvene,
 Salle be my levetenante, *with* lordchipez ynewe,
 Of alle my lele lege-mene, þat my landez þemes.”

648 He carpes tillø his cosyne þane, in counsaile hym selvene,—
 “I make the kepare, *syr* knyghte, of kyngrykes manye,
 Wardayne wyrchipfullø, to weilde al my landes,
 That I have wonnene of werre, in alle þis werlde ryche;

He bids him take
 care of Queen
 Guinever.

652 I wyll þat Waynour, my weife, in wyrchipe be holdene,
 That hire waunte noo wele, ne welthe þat hire lykes;
 Luke my kydde castells be clenlyche arrayede,

and of his castles
 and foresta.

There cho maye suggourne hire-selfe, wyth semlyche
 berynes.

The Queen alone
 is allowed to hunt
 in his absence.

656 ffaunde my fforestез be ffrythede, o frenchepe for evere,
 That nane werreye my wylde, botte Waynour hir selvene,
 And þat in þe sesone whenø grees es assignyde,
 That cho take hir solauce in certayne tyms

All officers are
 to be completely
 under his com-
 mand.

660 Chauncelere and chambyrleyne chaunge as þe lykes,
 Audytours and offycers ordayne thy selvene,—
 Bathe jureez, and juggez, and justicez of landes,
 Luke thow justyfyе themø wele that injurye wyrkes:

- 664 If me be destaynede to dye at Dryghtyns wylle,
 I charge the my sektour, cheffe of alle oper,
 To mynystre my mobles, fore mede of my saule,
 To mendynnantez and mysese in myschefe fallene :
- 668 Take here my testament of tresoure fulle huge,
 As I trayste appone the, be traye thowe me never !
 As þow wille answeere be-fore the austeryne jugge,
 That alle þis werlde wynly wysse as hyme lykes,
- 672 Luke þat my laste wylle be lelely perfourmede !
 Thow has clenly þe cure that to my coroune langez,
 Of alle my werdez wele, and my weyffe eke ;
 Luke þowe kepe the so clere, there be no cause fondene,
- 676 Whene I to contré come, if Cryste wille it thole,
 And thow have grace gudly to governe thy selvene,
 I salle coroune þe knyghte kyng with my handez.”
- 680 **T**han¹ syr Modrede fulle myldly meles hym selvene,
 Knelyd to þe conquerour, and carpes þise wordez,—
 “I be-seke þow, syr, as my sybbe lorde,
 þat þe wille for charyté cheese þow anoþer ;
 ffor if þe putte me in þis plytte, þowre pople es dyssavyde ;
- 684 To presente a prynce astate my powere es symple :
 Whene oper of werre wysse are wyrchipide here-aftyre,
 Thane may I forsothe be sette bott at lyttile.
 To passe in þour presance my purpos es takyne,
- 688 And alle my purveaunce apperte fore my pris knyghtez.”
 “Thowe arte my newewe fulle nere, my nurree of olde,
 That I have chastyede and chosene, a childe of my chambyre;
 ffor the sybredyne of me, fore-sake noghte þis offyce
- 692 That thow ne wyrk my wille, thow whatte watte it menes.”
Nowe he takez hys leve, and lengez no langere,
 At lordez, at lege-mene, þat leves hyme byhyndene.
 And seyne þat worthilyche wy went un-to chambyre,
 696 ffor to comfurthe þe qwene, þat in care lenges ;
 Waynour waykly wepande hym kyssiz,
 Talkez to hym tenderly with teres ynewe,—
 “I may wery the wye, that this werre movede,

If Arthur dies
 Mordred is to
 succeed him.

He bids him be
 faithful to his
 trust,

and promises to
 crown him king
 if he remain so.

[¹ Yan in MS.]

But Mordred de-
 sires to be ex-
 cused,

and would rather
 go to the war.

But Arthur bade
 him, as his near-
 est of kin, to
 undertake the
 office.

Then Arthur
 takes leave of
 his Queen.

Guinever laments
 his departure,

- and would rather die in his arms.
- 700 That warnes me wyrchippe of my wedde lorde;
 Alle my lykyngs of lyfe owte of lande wendez,
 And I in langour am leste, leve þe for evere!
 Schyne myghte I, dere lufe, dye in þour armes,
- But Arthur bids her not to grieve,
- 704 Are I þis destanye of dule sulde drye by myne one!"
 "Grete þe noghte, Gaynour, fore Goddes lufe of hewens,
 Ne gruche noghte my ganggyngs, it salle to gude turne!
 Thy wonrydez and thy wepyngs woundez myne herte,
- 708 I may noghte wit of þis woo, for alle þis werlde ryche;
 I have made a kepare, a knyghte of thyns awens,
 Overlyngs of Ynglande undyre thy selvens,
 And that es *syr* Mordrede, þat þow has mekylle praysede,
- and tells her that he has made Mordred, a knight of her own, his deputy.
- 712 Salle be thy dictour, my dere, to doo whatte the lykes."
 Thane he takes hys leve at ladys in chambyre,
 Kysside them kyndlyche, and to Criste be-teches;
 And then cho swounes fulls swythe, whe[n] he hys
 swerde aschede,
- Then he kisses the ladies, and takes leave of them.
 But Guinever swooned when he asked for his sword.
- 716 Twys in a swounyng, swette as cho walde!
 He pressed to his palfray, in *presance* of lordes,
 Prekys of the palez with his prys knyghtes,
 Wyth a realle rowte of þe rounde table;
- The king then departs hastily with his knights.
- 720 Soughte to-warde Sandewyche, cho sees hym no more!
 Thare the grete ware gederyde, wyth galyarde knyghtes,
 Garneschit over þe grene felde and graythelyche arayed;
 Dukkes and duzseperes daynttehely rydes,
- At Sandwich all the lords and their followers assemble.
- 724 Erlez of Ynglande with archers ynewe:
 Schirreves scharply schiftys the comouns,
 Rewlys be-fore þe ryche of the rounde table,
 Assignez ilke a contree to certayne lordes,
- 728 In the southe ons þe see banke saile whens þems lykes
 Thane bargez them buskez, and to þe baunke rowes,
 Bryngez blonkez ons bourde, and burlyche helmes;
 Trussez in tristly trappyde stedes,
- Horses, arms, tents, clothing, and provisions are shipped.
- 732 Tentez and othire toylez, and targez fulls ryche,
 Cabanes and clathe sokkes, and coferez fulls noble,
 Hukes and haknays, and horsez of armez;

Thus they stowe in the stuffe of fulls steryne knyghtez.

736 **Q**wene alle was schyppede that scholde, they schounte
no lengere,

Bot rentelde themȝe tyte, as þe tyde rynnez ;

Coggez and crayers, þan crosseȝ þaire mastez,

At the commandment of þe kyngȝe, uncoverde at ones.

740 Wyghtly one þe wale thay wye up þaire ankers,

By wytt of þe watyre menȝe of þe wale ytheȝ,

ffrekȝe one þe forestayne, fakenȝe þeire coblez,

In floynes and fercesteȝ, and Flesesche schyppes,

744 Tytt saillez to þe toppe, and turnez the lufe,

Standez appone sterc-bourde, sterynly þay songene,

The pryce schippeȝ of the porte provenȝe theire depnesse,

And fondeȝ wyth fullȝ saile ower the fawe ytheȝ ;

748 Holly with-owtȝyne harmȝe þay hale in bottes,

Schipe-menȝe scharply schotene þaire portez,

Launchez lede aponȝe lufe, lacchene þer depez,

Lukkes to þe lade-sterne whene þe lyghtȝe faillez ;

752 Casteȝ courseȝ be crafte, whene þe clowde rysez,

With þe nedylle and þe stone one þe nyghtȝe tydez ;

For drede of þe derke nyghtȝe þay drecchedȝe a lyttillȝe,

And alle þe steryne of þe streȝe strekyne at oneȝ :

756 The kyngȝe was in a gret cogge, with knyghtez fullȝ many,

In a cabane enclosedȝe, clenlyche arayede ;

With-in on a ryche bedde rystys a lyttillȝe,

And with þe swoghe of þe see in swefnyngȝe he fellȝe.

760 Hym dremyd of a dragone, dredfullȝe to beholde,

Come dryfande one þe depe to dreȝschene hys pople,

Ewene walkande owte of the Westȝe landez,

Wanderande unworthyly ower the wale ytheȝ ;

764 Bothe his hede and hys hals ware halely alle over

Cundyde of azure, enamelde fullȝ faire :

His scoulders ware schalyde alle in clene sylvere,

Schreede over alle þe schryȝpe with schrinkande poyntez ;

768 Hys wombe and hys wenges of wondyrfullȝe hawes,

In mervaylous maylys he mountede fullȝ hye ;

Then the ships
at the word of
command crosse
their yards,
weigh their an-
chors ;

the well-skilled
sailors hoist the
sails and steer
the vessels.

Then they haul
in the boats, shut
the ports, heave
the lead, look well
to the guiding
star, and skil-
fully shape their
course by the
compass.

After a little de-
lay on account of
darkness, they all
sail at once.

The king is in a
large vessel with
many knights,

Reposing himself
in his cabin, he
falls asleep,

and dreams of a
dreadful dragon.

His head and
neck were blue ;
his shoulders co-
vered with silver
scales ;

his belly and
wings of various
hues ;

- his feet were
black, and out of
his mouth there
came flame.
- Then there came
against the dra-
gon a fierce black
bear,
- with huge paws
and crooked
tusks,
- mis-shapen legs,
and foaming lips.
- Hecamecapering
and mocking,
- roaring and
raging for the
strife.
- Then the dragon
assailed him,
fighting like a
falcon with beak
and claws.
- The bear butts
him with his
tusks and causes
the blood to flow.
- He had killed the
dragon but for
the fire which he
breathes.
- Then the dragon
flies aloft, and
comes swooping
down,
- tearing a vast
rent in the back
of the bear,
- and carrying him
off in his claws,
lets him drop
into the water.
- Whayme *pat* he towchede he was tynt for ever!
Hys feete ware floreschede alle in fyne sabyll,
772 And syche a vennyymous flayre flowe fro his lyppez,
That the flode of *þe* flawez alle one fyre semyde!
Thane come of *þe* oryente, ewyne hyme agayneze,
A blake bustous bere abwene in the clowdes,
776 With yche a pawe as a poste, and paumes fulls huge,
With pykes fulls perilous, alle plyande þame semyde,
Lothene and lothely, lokkes and oþer,
Alle with lutterde legges, lokerde unfaire;
780 Filtyrde unfrely wyth fomaunde lyppez,
The foulleste of feigure that fourmede was ever!
He baltyrde, he bleryde, he braundyschte *þer*-after;
To bataile he bounnez hym with bustous clowez:
784 He romede, he rarede, that roggede alle *þe* erthe!
So ruydly he rappyd at to ryot hym selvene!
Thane the dragone on dreghe dressede hyme aayneze,
And with hys duttez hym drafe one dreghe by *þe* walkyne:
788 He fares as a fawcone, frekly he strykez;
Bothe with feete and with fyre he feghttys at ones!
The bere in the bataile *þe* bygger hym semyde,
And byttes hyme boldlye wyth balefulls tuskez;
792 Syche buffetez he hym rechez with hys brode klokcs,
Hys brest and hys brathelle was blodye alle over!
He rawmpyde so ruydly that alle *þe* erthe ryfez,
Rynnande one reede blode as rayne of the hevene!
796 He hade wereyde the worme by wyghtnesse of strenghte,
Ne ware it fore *þe* wylde fyre *pat* he hyme wyth defendez:
Thane wandyrz *þe* worme awaye to hys heghttez,
Comes glydande fro *þe* clowddez, and cowpez fulls evenes;
800 Towchez hym wyth his talonnez, and terez hys rigge,
Be-twyx *þe* taile and the toppe tens fote large!
Thus he brittenyd the bere, and broghte hyme olyfe,
Lette hyme falle in the flode, fleete whare hyme lykcs:
804 So they bryng *þe* bolde kyng bynne *þe* schippe burde,
pat nere he bristez for bale, one bede whare he lyggeze.

- Thane waknez the wyese kyng, wery fore-travailede,
 Takes hym two phylozophirs, that folowede hym ever,
 808 In the sevyne scyence the suteleste fondene,
 The cony[n]geste of clergie undyre Criste knowene;
 He tolde þeme of hys tourmente, þat tyme þat he slepede,
 "Drechede with a dragon, and syche a derfe beste,
 812 Has mad me full wery; þe telle me my swefene,
 Ore I mone swelte as swythe, as wysse me oure Lorde!"
 "Sir," saide þey son thane, thies sagge philosophe, Then Arthur
awaking was
troubled at the
dream, and sends
for his two philo-
sophers, men very
learned in the
seven sciences.
 "The dragon þat þow dremyde of, so dredfulle to schewe,
 816 That come dryfande over þe deepe, to drychen thy pople,
 Sothely and certayne thy selvene it es,
 That thus saillez over þe see with thy sekyre knyghtez:
 The colurez þat ware castyne appone his clere wengez,
 820 May be thy kyngrykez alle, that thow has ryghte wonnyne;
 And the tachesesede taile, with tonges so huge,
 Be-takyns þis faire folke, that in thy fleet wende.
 The bere that bryttenede was abowens in þe clowdez,
 824 Betakyns the tyrauntez þat tormentez thy pople;
 Or elles with some gyaunt some journee salle happyne,
 In syngulere batelle by þoure selfe one;
 And þow salle hafe þe victorye thurghe helpe of oure Lorde,
 828 As þow in thy vision was opynly schewede!
 Of this dredfulle dreame ne drede the no more,
 Ne kare noghte, *syr conquerour*, bot comforth thy selvene;
 And thise þat saillez over þe see, with thy sekyre knyghtez." These wise men
tell him that by
the dragon is
meant himself
and his knights.
 832 With trumpppez thene trustly, they trisene upe þaire saillez,
 And rowes over the ryche see, they rowtte alle at onez;
 The comely coste of Normandy they cachene full evene,
 And blythely at Barflete theis bolde are arryfed,
 836 And fyndys a flete there of frendez ynewe,
 The floure and þe faire folke of fyftene rewmez;
 ffore kynges and capytaynez kepyde hym fayre,
 As he at Carelele commaundede at Cristymesse hym selvene.
 840 Be they had taken the lande, and tentez upe rerede,
 Comez a templere tyte, and towchide to þe kyngs— The bear signi-
fies the tyrants
who torment his
people, or else
some giant whom
Arthur is desti-
ned to over-
throw in battle.
At Barflete they
find a fleet of
friends,
the flower of fif-
teen realms.
When they had
disembarked and
pitched their
tents, a Templar

comes to the
king,
and tells him of
a ferocious giant
who feeds upon
men and chil-
dren,

"Here es a teraunt be-syde that *tourmentez* thi pople,
A grett geaunte of geene, engenderde of fendez;
844 He has fretyne of folke mo thane fyfe hondrethe,
And als fele fawntekyns of freeborne childyre!
This has bene his sustynounce alle this sevens wynttere,
And jut es that sotte noghte sade, so wele hyme it lykez!
848 In þe contree of Constantyne no kynde has he leveda,
With-owttyne kydd castelles enclosid wyth walles,
That he ne has clenly distroyede alle the knave childyre,
And theme caryede to þe cragge, and clenly deworyde!

who had that
day captured the
Duchess of Brit-
tany, and carried
her to his den.

852 The ducheze of Bretayne to daye has he takyne,¹
Beside Reynes as scho rade with hire ryche knyghttes;
Ledd hyre to the mountayne, thare þat lede lenger,
To lye by that lady, aye whyls his lyfe lastez.

856 We folowede o ferrome moo theme fyfe hundrethe,
Of beryns, and of burgeys, and bachelers noble,
Bot he coverde the cragge; cho cryede so lowde,
The care of þat creatoure cover salls I never!

She was the
flower of all
France,
and the fairest
lady on earth,

860 Scho was flour of alle Fraunce, or of fyfe rewmes,
And one of the fayreste that fourmede was evere,
The gentileste jowells a-juggede with lordes,
fro Geene unto Gerone, by Jhesu of hevens!

cousin of Ar-
thur's Queen.

864 Scho was thy wyfes eosyne, knowe it if þe lykez,
Commens of þe rycheste, that regnez in erthe:
As thow arte ryghtwise kyngs rewe on thy pople,
And fande for to venge theme, that thus are rebuykyde!"

Then Sir Arthur
bitterly laments
her fate,

868 "Allas!" said *syr* Arthure, "so lange have I lyffede,
Hade I wytene of this, wele had me chefed; .
Me es noghte fallene faire, bot me es foule happynede,
That thus this faire ladye this fende has dystroyede!

and wishes he
had been there
to aid her.

872 I had levere thane alle Fraunce, this fyftene wynter
I hade bene be-fore thate freke, a furlange of waye,
Whene he that ladye had laghte and ledde to þe montez:
I hadde lefte my lyfe are cho hade harme lymppye!

¹ In the short romance of Arthur this unfortunate lady is described as fair Elaine, cousin to King Hoel.

- 876 Bot walde þow kene me to þe crage, thare þat kene lengez. He desires to know where the
I walde cayre to þat coste, and carpe wythe hym-selvene, giant lives,
To trete with that tyraunt fore tresons of londes,
And take trewe for a tyme, till it may tyde bettyre."
- 880 "Sire, see þe þone farlande, with þone two fyrez, and is directed
þar filsuez þat fonde, fraist whens the lykes? by the Templar
Appons the creste of the cragge, by a colde welle, how to find his
That enclosez þe clyfe with þe clere strandez, abode,
- 884 Ther may thow fynde folke fay wyth-owttyns nowmer, where there are
Mo florenez in faythe thane Fraunce es in aftyre; many captives,
And more tresour untrewely that traytour has getyne, and vast treasure
Thane in Troye was as I trowe, þat tyme þat it was wonne." stored up.
- 888 Thane romyez the ryche kyng for rewthe of þe pople, Then Arthur is
Raykez ryghte to a tente, and restez no lengere; greatly excited,
He welterys, he wristeles, he wryngez hys handez!
Thare was no wy of þis werlde, þat wyste whatt he menede!
- 892 He calles *syr* Cayous þat of þe cowpe serfede, and bids Sir
And *syr* Bedvere þe bolde, þat bare hys brande ryche,— Cayous and Sir
"Luke þe aftyre evensange be armyde at-ryghttez, Bedevere attend
On blonkez by þone buscayle, by þone blythe stremez, him at evening,
- 896 ffore I wille passe in pilgremage prevely here aftyre,
In the tyme of suppere, whene lordez are servede,
ffor to sekens a saynte be þone salte stremes,
In Seynt Mighelle mound, there myraclez are schewede." pretending that
pilgrimage.
- 900 Aftyre evesange, Sir Arthure hym-se[l]fens
Wente to hys wardrope, and warpe of hys wedez;
Armede hym in a actone with orfraeez fulls ryche,
Aboven one þat a jeryne of Acres owte over, Then Arthur pro-
ceeds to dress
and arm himself,
- 904 Aboven þat a jesseraunt of jentylls maylez,
A jupons of Jerodyns jaggede in schredez;
He brayedez one a bacenett burneschte of sylver,
The beste þat was in Basille, wyth bordurs ryche;
- 908 The creste and þe coronalle, enclosed so faire
Wyth clasppis of clere golde, couched wyth stones;
The vesare, þe aventaille, enarmede so faire,
Voyde with-owttyns vice, with wyndowes of sylver;

- and mounting a brownsteed, rides to the spot where his knights await him.
- 912 His gloves gaylyche gilte, and gravenes at þe hemmez,
 With grayvez and gobelets, glorious of hewe;
 He bracez a brade schelde, and his brande aschez,
 Bounede hym a broune stede, and one þe bente hovys;
 916 He sterte till his stereþe and stridez one lofte,
 Streynnez hym stowtly, and sterys hym faire,
 Brochez þe baye stede, and to þe buske rydez,
 And there hys knyghtes hym kepede full clenlyche
 arayede:
- There was a grove by the side of the river full of game and decked with flowers.
- 920 Thane they roode by þat ryver, þat rynnyd so swythe,
 Pare þe rynde overrechez with realle bowghez;
 The roo and þe rayne-dere reklesse thare rounene,
 In ranez and in rosers to ryotte þame selvens;
- Here all birds abounded,
- 924 The frithez ware floreschte with flourez full many,
 Wyth fawcouns and fesantez of ferlyche hewez;
 All þe feulez thare fleschez, that flyez with wengez,
 ffore thare galede þe gowke one grevez full lowde,
- and nightingales in vast numbers made sweet music.
- 928 Wyth alkyn gladchipe þay gladdene þame selvens:
 Of þe nyghtgale notez þe noisez was swette,
 They threþide wyth the throstills thre-hundreth at ones!
 þat whate swowyng of watyr, and syngyng of byrdez,
- Here they leave their horses, and the king bids his knights to await his return.
- 932 It myghte salve hym of sore, that sounde was nevere!
 Thane ferkez this folke, and one fotte lyghttez,
 ffestenez theire faire stedez o ferrom by-twene;
 And thene the kyng kenely comandyde hys knyghtez
 936 ffor to byde with theire blonkez, and bowne no forthyre,—
 “ffore I wille seke this seynte by my-selfe one,
 And melle with this mayster mane, þat this monte þemez;
 And seyne salle þe offyre, aythyre aftyre oper,
- The king alone ascends the mountain,
- 940 Menskfully at Saynt Mighelle full myghty with Criste!”
 The kyng coveris þe cragge wyth cloughes full hye,
 To the creste of the clyffe he clymbez one lofte;
 Keste up e hys umbrere, and kenly he lukes,
 944 Caughte of þe colde wynde to comforthe hym selvens;
 Two fyrez he fynde fflawmande full hye,
 The fourte dele a furlange be-twene þis he walkes;

- þe waye by þe welle strandez he wandyrde hym one,
 948 To wette of þe warlawe, whare þat he lengez;
 He ferkez to þe fyrste fyre, and evene there he fyndez
 A wery wafulle wedowe, wryngande hire handez,
 And gretande on a grave grysely teres,
 952 Now merkyde one molde, sene myddaye it semede:
 He saluþede þat sorowfulle with sittande wordez,
 And fraynez aftyre the fende fairely there aftyre:
 Thane this wafulle wyfe un-wynly hym gretez,
 956 Coverde up on hire kneess, and clappyde hir handez;
 Said, "carefull caremane, thou carpez to lowde!
 May þone warlawe wyt, he worows us alle!
 Weryd worthe þe wyghte ay, that þe thy wytt refede,
 960 That mase the to wayfe here in þise wyld lakes!
 I warne þe fore wyrchipe, þou wynlez aftyr sorowe!
 Whedire buskes þou berne? unblysside þow semes!
 Wenez thou to brittene hyme with thy brande ryche?
 964 Ware thou wyghttere thane Wade or Wawayne owthire,
 Thou wynnys no wyrchipe, I warne the be-fore!
 Thou saynned the unsekyrly to seke to þese mountez,
 Siche sex ware to symple to semble with hyme one;
 968 ffor and thou see hyme with syghte, the servez no herte,
 To sayne the sekerly, so semez hym huge!
 Thou arte frely and faire, and in thy fyrste flourez,
 Bot thou arte fay be my faythe, and þat me for-thynkkys!
 972 Ware syche fyfty one a felde, or one a faire erthe,
 The freke walde with hys fyste felle þow at ones!
 Loo! here, the ducheze dere, to daye was cho takyne,
 Depe dolvene and dede dyked in molde;
 976 He hade morthirede this mylde be myddaye war rongene,
 With-owttnye mercy one molde, not watte it ment:
 He has forsede hir and fylede, and cho es fay levede;
 He slewe hir un-slely, and slitt hir to þe navyll!
 980 And here have I bawmede hir, and beryede þer aftyr,
 ffor bale of þe botelesse, blythe be I never!
 Of alle þe frendrez cho hade, þere folowede none aftyre,

and going to a fire which he sees he finds a woeful widow wringing her hands.

He asks her concerning the giant.

She answers with terror, and warns him that he cannot hope to contend with so terrible a monster.

Fifty such as Arthur he could fell with his flat.

The poor Duchesse had been ravished and murdered by him, and the doleful widow, her foster-mother, had buried her.

and would remain
there till death to
bewall her.

Then Arthur says
that he comes
from the great
King Arthur on
a mission to
treat with the
giant.

The old wife tells
him that he cares
nothing for laws
or treaties; that
he regards not
gold or treasure;

only he has a
famous kyrtle co-
vered with hair,

which is bordered
with the beards
of mighty kings,

which are sent
to him on each
Easter-eve.

He has long
wished for the
beard of Arthur,
and tried to force
the Breton kings
to get it for him.

If he has brought
the beard, he may

Bot I hir foster modyr of fyftene wynter!

984 To ferke of this farlande, fande walle I never,
Bot here be foundene on felde, till I be fay levede!"

Thane answers *syr* Arthure to *pat* alde wyf;

"I am comyne fra the conquerour, curtaise and gentille,
988 As one of *þe* hathelest of Arthur knyghtez,
Messenger to *þis* myx, for mendemente of *þe* pople,
To mele with this maister mane, that here this mounste
þemez;

To trete with this tyraunt for tresour of landez,

992 And take trew for a tyme, to bettyr may worthe."

"þa, thire wordis are bot waste," *quod* this wif thane,
"ffor bothe landez and lythes fulle lyttill by he settes;
Of rentez ne of rede golde rekkez he never,

996 ffor he wille lenge owt of lawe, as hym-selfe thynkes,
With-owtene licence of lede, as lorde in his awene;

Bot he has a kyrtill one, kepide for hym selvene,
That was sponene in Spayne with specyalle byrdez,

1000 And sythyn garnescht in Grece fulle graythly to-gedirs,
That es hydede alle with hare hally al overe,
And bordyrde with the berdez of burlyche kynges,
Crispid and kombide, that kempis may knawe

1004 I the kyng by his colour, in kythe there he lengez;
Here the ferme he fangez of fyftene rewmez,
ffor ilke Esterne ewyne, how-ever that it falle;
They send it hym sothely for saughte of *þe* pople,

1008 Sekerly at *pat* sesone with certayne knyghtez,
And he has aschede Arthure alle *þis* seven wynter.
fforthy hurdez he here, to owtraye hys pople,
Till *þe* Bretones kynges have burneschte his lyppys,

1012 And sent his berde to that bolde wyth his beste berynes;
Bot thowe hafe broghte *pat* berde, bowne the no forthire,
ffor it es butelesse bale, thowe biddez oghte elles;
ffor he has more tresour to take whene hym lykez,

1016 Than evere aughte Arthure, or any of hys elders;
If thowe hase broghte *þe* berde, he bese more blythe

- Thane þow e gafe hym Burgoyne, or Bretayne þe more ; be sure of a hearty welcome.
 Bot luke now e for charitee, þow chasty thy lyppes,
- 1020 That the no wordez eschape, whate so be-tydez ; But he must approach him with due caution,
 Luke þat presante be priste, and presse hym bott lytill e,
 ffor he es at his sowper, he wille be sone grevyde ; and had better doff his clothes and kneel to him.
 And þow my concelle doo, þow doffe of thy clothes,
- 1024 And knele in thy kyrtylle, and calle hym thy lorde ; His supper at this season is composed of seven male children chopped up with pickles and condiments.
 He sowppes alle þis sesone with seven knave childre,
 Choppid in a chargour of chalke whytt sylver,
 With pekille and powdyre of precious spyce,
- 1028 And pyment full e plentevous of Portyngale wynes ; Three savage birds act as turnspits for him.
 Thre balefull e birdez his brochez þey turne,
 That byddez his bedgatt, his byddyng e to wyrche ;
 Siche foure scholde be fay with-in foure hourez,
- 1032 Are his fylth ware filled, that his flesch ȝernes.”
 “ȝa, I have broghte þe berd,” quod he, “the bettyre me
 lykez ;
 ffor-thi wille I boun e me, and bere it my selvene ;
 Bot lefe walde þow lere me where þat lede lengez,
- 1036 I salle alowe þe and I liffe, oure Lorde so me helpe !”
 “fferke fast to þe fyre,” quod cho, “that flawmez so hye ;
 Thare fillis þat fende hym e, fraist whene the lykez ;
 Bot thow moste seke more southe, syddynges a lytill e,
- 1040 ffor he wille hafe sent hym-selfe sex myle large.”
 To þe sowre of þe reke he soghte at þe gayneste,
 Sayned hym e sekerly with certayne wordez,
 And sydlynges of þe segge the syghte had he rechide,
- 1044 How un-seml e þat sott satt sowpande hym one ;
 He lay levand one lange, bugande un-faire,
 þe thee of a mans lymme lyfte up by þe haunche ;
 His bakke and his bewschers, and his brode lende,
- 1048 He bekez by þe bale fyre, and breklesse hym e semede ;
 þare ware rostez full e ruyde, and rewfull e bredez,
 Beerynes and bestaile brochede to-geders ;
 Cowle-full e cramede of crysined e childyre,
- 1052 Sum as brede brochede, and bierdez þame tournede.
- “Yes,” says Arthur, “I have indeed brought this beard ; but show me where I shall find him.”
- Then she directs him to approach the great fire.
- Arthur goes to the fire, and finds the giant lying extended with his back to the fire, picking the thigh of a man.
- Roasts of the flesh of children and cattle were spitted together, being prepared for him in various ways.

Then Arthur's
heart bleeds for
the woes inflicted
by this wretch.

He fastens on
his shield and
brandishes his
bright sword,

and right boldly
addresses the
giant.

He upbraids
him with his vile
crimes and his
unclean meat.

For his horrible
murders of chris-
tian children,

he would now
take vengeance
on him, by the
aid of St. Michael,
and give his soul
to the devil.

Then the giant
stared with
amazement, and
gnashed his teeth
with fury.

Out of his mouth
there came
smoke, which
covered all his
face.

He was hook-
nosed like a
hawk, with hair
up to his eyes, and
beetle brows.

His skin was hard
as that of a dog-
fish; his ears
huge and ugly;
his eyes horrible
and burning.

- And þane this comlych kyng, by-cause of his pople,
His herte bledez for bale, one bent ware he standez !
Thane he dressede one his schelde, schuntes no lengere,
Braundesche his brighte swerde by þe bryghte hiltē,
Raykez to-warde þe renke reghte with a ruyde wille,
And hyely hailsez þat hulke with hawtayne wordez,—
“ Now, alle-weldand Gode, þat wyscheppez us alle,
1060 Giff the sorowe and syte, sotte there thow lygges,
ffor the fulsomeste freke that fourmede was evere !
ffouly thow fedys the, þe fende have thi sanle !
Here es cury un-clene, carle, be my trowthe,
1064 Caffē of creatours alle, thow curssede wriche !
Be-cause that þow killide has pise cresmede childyre,
Thow has marters made, and broghte oute of lyfe,
þat here are brochede one bente, and brittenede with
thi handez,
1068 I salle merke þe thy mede, as þou has myche serfed,
Thurghe myghte of Seynt Mighelle, þat pis monte ȝemes !
And for this faire ladye, þat þow has fey levyde,
And þus forced one foulde, for fylth of pi-selfene !
1072 Dresse the now, dogge, sone, the devells have pi saule !
ffor þow salle dye this day, thurghe dynt of my handez !”
Thane glonpede þe glotone and glorede un-faire ;
He grevede as a grewhounde, with grylsy tuskes ;
1076 He gapede, he groned faste, with grucchande latez,
ffor grefe of þe gude kyng, þat hymē with grame gretez !
His fax and his foretoppe was filterede to-geders,
And owte of his face some ane halfe fote large ;
1080 His frount and his forhevede alle was it over,
As þe felle of a froske, and fraknede it semede,
Huke-nebbyde as a hawke, and a hore berde,
And herede to þe hole eyghne with hyngande browes ;
1084 Harske as a hunde-fisch, hardly who so lukez,
So was þe hyde of þat hulke hally al over !
Erne had he fulle huge, and ugly to schewe,
With eghne fulle horrible, and ardaunt for sothe ;

- 1088 flatt mowthede as a fluke, with fieryande lyppys,
 And þe flesche in his fortethe fowly as a bere :
 His berde was brothy and blake, þat till his brest rechede,
 Grassede as a mereswyne with cokes fulle huge,
- 1092 And alle falterde þe flesche in his foule lyppys,
 Ilke wrethe as a wolfe-hevede, it wraythe owtt at ones !
 Bullenekkyde was þat bierne, and brade in the scholders,
 Brok-brestede as a brawne, with brustils fulle large,
- 1096 Ruyd armes as an ake with rusclede sydes,
 Lymes and leskes fulle lothyne, leve þe for-sothe :
 Schovelle-fotede was þat schalke, and schaylande hyme
 semyde,
 With schankez unschaply, schowande to-gedyrs ;
- 1100 Thykke theefe as a thursse, and thikkere in the hanche,
 Greesse growene as a galte, fulle grylych he lukez !
 Who þe lenghe of þe lede lelly accountes,
 ffor þe face to þe fote, was fyfe fadome lange !
- 1104 Thane stertez he up sturdely one two styffe schankez,
 And sone he caughte hym a clubb alle of clene yryne !
 He walde hafe kyllede þe kyng with his kene wapene,
 Bot thurgh þe crafte of Cryste ȝit þe carle failede ;
- 1108 The creest and þe coronalle, þe claspes of sylver,
 Glenly with his clubb he crasschede doune at onez !
 The kyng castes up his schelde, and covers hym faire,
 And with his burlyche brande a box he hym reches ;
- 1112 ffulle butt in þe frunt the fromonde he hittez,
 That the burnyscht blade to þe brayne rynnez ;
 He feyed his fysnamye with his foule hondez,
 And frappez faste at hys face fersely þer-aftyr !
- 1116 The kyng chaungez his fote, eschewes a lyttille,
 Ne had he eschapede þat choppe, chevede had evylle ;
 He folowes in fersly, and festenesse a dynte
 Hye upe one the haunche, with his harde wapyne,
- 1120 That he hillid the swerde halfe a fote large ;
 The hott blode of þe hulke un-to the hilde rynnez,
 Ewyne into inmette the gyaunt he hyttez,

Flat-mouthed,
 with grinning
 lips, and jaws
 like a bear.

A black beard
 reached to his
 breast, with
 mighty bristles.
 The flesh of his
 lips was in un-
 even folds, each
 fold, like an out-
 law, twisted it-
 self out.

He was bull-
 necked and broad
 in the shoulders ;
 breasted like a
 boar, with huge
 bristles ; his arms
 like an oak ; his
 limbs and flanks
 loathly ; shovel-
 footed and scaly,
 with unshapely
 shanks ;

of gigantic thick-
 ness in his
 haunches.

Fat as a pig, he
 looks horrible.

In height, full
 five fathoms.

Up starts this
 fell giant, and
 seizing an iron
 club, aims a blow
 at Arthur.

The king catches
 it on his shield,
 and returns the
 blow with his
 sword right upon
 the forehead.

The bright blade
 pierces to the
 brain.

The giant tears
 his face with his
 hands, and strikes
 fiercely at the
 king.

Arthur draws
 back,

and then drives
 his sword into the
 giant's haunch.

- Just to þe genitales, and jaggede þame in sondre!
- The monster roars and strikes at random. So mighty is his stroke, that it penetrates a sword's length into the ground. The king nearly swoons at the noise of the blow, but quickly striking him, bursts asunder his groin. His entrails and blood gush out. Then throwing away his club, the giant seizes Arthur in his arms.
- 1124 Thane he romyede and rarede, and ruydly he strykez
 . ffulle egerly at Arthur, and one the erthe hittez
 A swerde lenghe *with-in* the swarthe, he swappez at ones,
 That nere swounes þe kyng for swoughe of his dynttez!
- 1128 Bot þit the kyng sweperly fulle swythe he byswenkez,
 Swappez in *with* the swerde þat it þe swange brystedd;
 Bothe þe guttez and the gorre guschez owte at ones,
 þat alle englaymez þe gresse, one grounde þer he standez!
- 1132 Thane he castez the clubb, and the kyng hentez,
 On þe creeste of þe cragg he caughte hyme in armez,
 And enclosez hyme clenly, to crusehene hys rybbez;
 So harde haldez he þat hende, that nere his herte brystez!
- 1136 þane þe balefulle bierdez bownez to þe erthe,
 Knelande and cryande, and clappide þeire handez,—
 “Crist comforte þone knyghte, and kepe hym fro sorowe,
 And latte *never* þone fende felle hyme olyfe!”
- The baleful birds pray for the success of Arthur.
- 1140 þitt es þe warlow so wyghte, he welters hyme undere,
 Wrothely þai wrythyne and wrystille to-gederz,
With welters and walowes over *with-in* þase buskez,
 Tumbellez and turnes faste, and terez paire wedez,
- They have a fearful wrestling match, and fall from the top of the cliff down to the shore.
- 1144 Untenderly fro þe toppe thai tiltine to-gederz;
 Whilome Arthure over, and oþer while undyre,
 ffro þe heghe of the hylle un-to the harde roche;
 They feyne *never* are they falle at þe flode merkes;
- Arthur stabs the giant,
- 1148 Bot Arthur *with* ane anlace egerly smyttez,
 And hittez *ever* in the hulke up to þe hiltez;
 þe theefe at þe dede thrawe so throly hyme thryngez,
 þat three rybbys in his syde he thrystez in sundere!
- who in his death-struggle breaks three of Arthur's ribs.
- 1152 Thenne *syr* Kayous the kene unto the kyng styrttez,—
 Said, “allas! we are lorne, my lorde es confundede,
 Over fallene with a fende! us es fulle hapnede!
 We mone be forfekede in faith, and flemýde for *ever*!”
- His knights find him lying exhausted.
- 1156 þay hafe up hys hawberke þane, and handilez þer-undyre,
 His hyde and his haunche eke, one heghte to þe schuldrez;
 His flawnke and his feletez, and his faire sydez,

- Bothe his bakke and his breste, and his bryghte armez :
- 1160 þay ware fayne that they fandē no flesche entamede, They examine him and find no wound.
 And for þat journee made joye, þir gentille knyghttez ;
 "Now, certez," saise Sir Bedwere, "it semez, be my
 Lorde !
 He sekez seyntez bot seldene, þe sorere he grypes,
- 1164 That thus clekys this corsaunt owte of þir heghe clyffez,
 To carye forthe sicke a carle at close hym in silvere ;
 Be Myghelle of syche a makke, I hafe myche wondyre
 That ever owre soveraygne Lorde suffers hyme in hevене ;
- 1168 And alle seyntez be syche, þat servez oure Lorde, If all saints are like him no saint would be be.
 I salle never no seynt bee, be my fadyre sawle !"
 Thane bourdez þe bolde kyng at Bedvere wordez,—
 þis seynt have I soghte, so helpe me owre Lorde !
- 1172 for-thy brayd owtte þi brande, and broche hyme to þe Arthur bids him stab the monster to the heart, to make sure of him, for only once before had he met with such a terrible foe.
 herte ;
 Be sekere of this sergeaunt, he has me sore grevede !
 I faghte noghte wyth syche a freke þis fyftene wyntyrs,
 Bot in the montez of Araby I mett syche anoþer ;
- 1176 He was þe forcyere be ferre þat had I nere fundene,
 Ne had my fortune bene faire, fey had I levede !
 Anone stryke of his hevede, and stake it there aftyre,
 Gife it to thy sqwyere, fore he es wele horsede ;
- 1180 Bere it to syr Howelle, þat es in harde bandez, He bids them cut off his head, and bear it first to Sir Hoel,
 And byd hyme herte hym wele, his enmy es destruede !
 Syne bere it to Bareflete, and brace it in yryne,
 And sett it on the barbycane, biernes to schewe ;
- 1184 My brande and my brode schelde apon þe bent lyggez,
 On þe creeste of þe cragge, thare fyrste we encountrede,
 And þe clubb þarby, alle of clene irene, His sword and shield and the giant's club are to be fetched from the hill.
 þat many Cristene has killyde in Constantyne landez ;
- 1188 fferke to the far-lande, and fetchē me þat wapene,
 And late founde tillē oure flete, in flode þare it lengez :
 If thou wylle any tresour, take whate the lykez ;
 Have I the kyrtylle and þe clubb, I coveite noghte elles !"
- 1192 Now þey caire to þe cragge, þise comlyche knyghtez, They may take what treasure they will ; all Arthur desires is the kirtle and the club.

And broghte hym *þe* brade schelde, and his bryghte
wapene,

The affair was
kept a secret till
break of day.

The clubb and the cotte alles, Sir Kayows hym selvene,
And kayres with conquerour, the kynges to schewe;

1196 That in coverte the kyng helde closse to hym selvene,
Whilles clene day fro *þe* clowde, clymbyd on lofte.

Be that to courte was comene clamour fulle huge,
And be-fore the comlyche kyng they knelyd alle at
ones,—

Then the people
kneel before Ar-
thur, and thank
and praise him
for slaying the
giant.

1200 “Welcome, oure liege lorde, to lang has thow duellyde!
Governour undyr Gode, graytheste and noble,
To whame grace es graunted, and gyffens at his wille!
Now thy comly come has comforthede us alle!”

1204 Thow has in thy realtee revengyde thy pople!
Thurghe helpe of thy hande, thyne enmyse are struyede,
That has thy renkes over-ronne, and refte theme their
chilydre!

What never rewme owte of araye so redyly relevede!”

Arthur ascribes
all to God.

1208 Thane *þe* conquerour Cristenly carpez to his pople,
“Thankes Gode,” *quod* he, “of *þis* grace, and no gome elles,
for it was never manes dede, bot myghte of Hymselfene,
Or myracle of hys modyre, þat mylde es tille alle!”

He bids his fol-
lowers distribute
the giant's trea-
sure among the
clergy and people.

1212 He somond þan *þe* schippemene scharpely *þer*-aftyre,
To schake furth with *þe* schyre mene to schifte *þe* gudez;
“Alle *þe* myche tresour that traytour had wonnene,
To commons of the contré, clergie ond oþer,

1216 Luke it be done and delte to my dere pople,
That none pleyne of their parte, o peyne of þour lyfez.”
He comande hys cosyne, with knyghtlyche wordez,
To make a kyrke on *þe* cragg, ther the corse lengez,

A church and
convent are to
be built on the
cliff.

1220 And a covent there-in, Criste for to serfe,
In mynde of þat martyre, þat in *þe* monte rystez.

When the giant
was slain, Arthur
moves from Bar-
flete to Castle
Blanc.

Q wen Sir Arthur the kynges had kyllid *þe* gyaunt,
Than blythely fro Bareflete he buskes one *þe* morne,
1224 With his batelle one brede, by þa blythe stremes;

- To-warde Castelle Blanke he chesez hym the waye,
 Thurghe a faire champayne, undyr schalke hyllis;
 The kyng fraystez a-furth *over* the fresche strandez,
- 1228 ffoundez with his faire folke *over* as hym lykez:
 ffurthe stepes that steryne, and strekez his tentis
 One a strenghe by a streme, in *pas* straytt landez.
 Onone aftyre middaye, in the mene-while,
- 1232 pare comez two messangeres of tha fere marchez,
 ffra *pe* marschalle of Fraunce, and menskfully hym gretes,
 Besoghte hyme of *soucour*, and saide hyme thise wordez,—
 “Sir, thi marschalle thi mynistre, thy *mercy* be-sekez,
- 1236 Of thy mekill~~e~~ magestee, fore mendment of thy pople,
 Of pise marchez-mene, that thus are myskaryede,
 And thus merred amange, maugree theire eghne;
 I witter *pe pe* *emperour* es entirde into Fraunce,
- 1240 With osten of enmye, horrible and huge;
 Brynnez in Burgoyne thy burghes so ryche,
 And brittenes thi baronage, that bieldez thare-in;
 He encrochez kenely by craftez of armez,
- 1244 Countrese and castelles *pat* to thy coroun langez;
 Confoundez thy commons, clergy and *oper*;
 Bot thow comfurth them~~e~~, syr kyng~~e~~, *cover* salle they
 never!
- He fellez forestez fele, forrayse thi landez,
- 1248 ffyrsthez no fraunchez, bot fraisez the pople;
pus he fellez thi folke, and fangez theire gudez!
 ffremedly the Franche tung fey es be-lefede.
 He drawes in-to douce Fraunce, as Duchemen tellez,
- 1252 Dresside *wit*h his dragouns, dredfull~~e~~ to schewe;
 Alle to dede they dyghte with dynttys of swerddez,
 Dukez and dusperes, *pat* dreches thare-ine;
 ffor-thy the lordez of the lande, ladys and *oper*,
- 1256 Prayes the for Petyr luffe, *pe* apostylle of Rome,
 Sen thow arte present in place, *pat* *how* wille profyre make
 To *pat* *perilous* prynce, be *processe* of tyme;
 He ayers by *pone* hilles, *pone* heghe holtez undyr,
- Then come two messengers from the Marshal of France, who acquaint Arthur
- with the mischief which the Emperor Lucius is working in France,
- seizing castles,
- confounding the commons,
- seizing forests,
- taking goods,
- killing dukes and douze-peers.
- Therefore they desire Arthur's help.

- 1260 Hufes thare with hale strenghe of haythene kynges;
 Helpe nowe for His lufe, that heghe in hevene sittez,
 And talke tristly to theme, that thus us destroyes!"
- He sends some of his knights to the Emperor, 1264 The kyng biddis *syr* Boice, "buske the be-lyfe!
 Take with the *syr* Berille, and Bedwere the ryche,
 Sir Gawayne and *syr* Gryme, these galyarde knyghtez,
 And graythe þowe to þone grene wode, and gose over
 þer nedes;
 Saise to *syr* Lucius, to unlordly he wyrkez,
- 1268 Thus letherly agaynes law to lede my pople;
 I lette hyme or oghte lange, þif me þe lyffe happene,
 Or my lyghte salle lawe, þat hyme overe lande folowes;
 Comande hym kenely wyth crewelle wordez,
- to bid him depart out of his kingdom, or meet him in single combat. 1272 Cayre owte of my kyngryke with his kydd knyghtez;
 In caase that he wille noghte, þat cursede wreche,
 Come for his curtaisie, and countere me ones!
 Thane salle we rekkene fulle rathe, whatt ryghte þat he
 claymes,
- 1276 Thus to ryot þis rewme and raunsone the pople!
 Thare salle it derely be delte with dynttez of handez:
 The Dryghttens at Domesdaye dele as hyme lykes!"
- The knights go on their errand glittering in gold upon great steeds. 1280 Now thei graythe theme to goo, theis galyarde knyghttez,
 Alle gleterande in golde, appone grete stedes,
 To-warde þe grene wode, þat with growndene wapyne,
 To grete wele the grett lorde, that wolde be grefede sone;
 Thise hende hovez on a hille by þe holte eynes,
- They see the luxurious camp of the heathen kings. 1284 Be-helde þe howsyng fulle hye of Hathene kynges;
 They herde in theire herbergage hundrethez fulle many,
 Hornez of olyfantez fulle helych blawene;
 Palaisez proudliche pyghte, þat palyd ware ryche,
- and the rich tents of the Romans. 1288 Of palle and of purpure, wyth precyous stones;
 Pensels and pomelle of ryche prynce armez,
 Fighthe in þe playne mede, þe pople to schewe:
 And thane the Romayns so ryche had arayede their tentez
- 1292 On rawe by þe ryvere, undyre þe round hillez,
 The emperour for honour ewyne in the myddes,

- Wyth egles al *over* ennelled so faire :
 And saw hyme and þe Sowdane, and senatours many,
- 1296 Seke to-warde a sale with sextene kynges,
 Syland softly in, swettly by theme selfene,
 To sowpe withe þat soveraygne, fulle selcouthe metez.
 Nowe they wende *over* the watyre, þise wyrchipfulle
 knyghttez,
- 1300 Thurghe þe wode to þe wone, there the wyese rystez ;
 Reght as þey hade weschene, and went to þe table,
 Sir Wawayne þe worthethy un-wynly he spekes,—
 “The myghte *and* þe majestee, that menskes us alle,
- 1304 That was merked and made thurghe þe myghte of hym-
 selvene,
 Gyffe þow sytte in þour sette, Sowdane and *oper*,
 That here are semblede in sale, unfawghte mott þe worthe !
 And þe fals heretyke, þat emperour hym callez,
- 1308 That occupyes in erreure the empyre of Rome,
 Sir Arthure herytage, þat honourable kyng,
 That alle his auncestres aughte bot Utere hyme one,
 That ilke cursynge þat Cayme kaghte for his brothyre,
- 1312 Cleffe *over* the cukewalde, with croune ther thow lengez,
 ffor the unlordlyeste lede þat I on lukede ever !
 My lorde *mervailles* hym mekylle, manc, be my trouthe,
 Why thow morthires his mene, þat no mysse serves,
- 1316 Commons of þe contré, clergye and *oper*,
 þat are noghte coupable þer-in, ne knawes noght in armez ;
 ffor-thi the comelyche kyng, curtays and noble,
 Comandez þe kenely to kaire of his landes,
- 1320 Ore elles for thy knyghthede encontre hyme ones ;
 Sen þow covettes the coroune, latte it be declared !
 I hafe dyschargide me here, chalange whoo lykez,
 Be-fore alle thy chevalrye, cheftaynes and *oper* :
- 1324 Schape us an ansuere, and schunte þow no lengere,
 þat we may schifte at þe schorte, and schewe to my lorde.”
 The emperour ansuerde wyth austeryne wordez,
 “þe are with myne enmy, Sir Arthure hyme selvene !

The Roman Emperor and the Sultan are going to banquet together.

The knights present themselves.

Sir Gawaine delivers the message,

and upbraids with haughty words the Roman Emperor ;

bids him depart, or try a single combat with Arthur.

He challenges all the knights of Rome.

The Emperor replies,

- 1328 It es none honour to me to owtray hys knyghttez,
 Poghe þe be irous mene, þat ayres one his nedez ;
 Bot say to thy soveraygne, I send hyme thes wordez,
 Ne ware it for reverence of my ryche table,
- threatening the 1332 þou sulde repent fulle rathe of þi ruyde wordez !
 knights for their
 audacity. Siche a rebawde as þowe rebuke any lordes,
 Wyth theire retenuz arrayede, fulle realle *and* noble !
- He will stay in 1336 Here wille I suggourne, whilles me lefe thynkes,
 Arthur's land as
 long as he pleases, And sythene seke in by Sayne *with* solace þer-aftere ;
 Ensegge all þa cetese be the salte strandez,
 And seyne ryde in by Rone, þat rynnes so faire,
- and destroy his 1340 And of alle his ryche castelles rusche doune þe walles ;
 cities and castles. I salle noghte lefe in Paresche, by processe of tyme,
 His parte of a pechelyne, prove whene hyme lykes !
- Whereupon Sir 1340 " Now, certez," sais *syr* Wawayne, " myche wondyre
 Gawaine desires
 himself to fight
 with him, have I,
 þat syche an alfyne as thow dare speke syche wordez !
- 1344 I had lever thene alle Fraunce, that hevede es of rewmes,
 ffyghte *with* the faythefully one felde be oure one."
- but Sir Gayous, 1348 Thane answers *syr* Gayous fulle gobbede wordes,—
 uncle to the
 Roman Emperor,
 answers and
 charges the Brit- Was eme to þe emperour, and erle hyme selfene,—
 ish knights with
 being braggarts. " Evere ware þes Bretons braggers of olde !
 Loo ! how he brawles hyme for hys bryghte wedes,
 As he myghte bryttyne us alle *with* his brande ryche !
 þitt he berkes myche boste, þone boy þere he standes !"
- 1352 Thane grevyde *syr* Gawayne at his grett wordes,
 Graythes to-warde þe gome *with* grucchande herte ;
 With hys stelyne brande he strykes of hys hevede,
 And sterttes owtte to hys stede, and *with* his stale
 wendes !
- On this Sir Ga- 1356 Thurgh þe wacches þey wente, thes wirchipfulle
 waine rushes at
 him and strikes
 off his head. knyghtez,
 And fyndez in theire fare waye wondyrlyche many ;
 Over the watyre þey wente by wyghtnesse of horses,
 And tuke wynde as þey walde by þe wodde hemes :
- 1360 Thane folous frekly one fote frekkes ynewe,
- Then the British 1360 Thane folous frekly one fote frekkes ynewe,
 knights fly with
 all speed.

- And of þe Romayns arrayed appone ryche stedes,
 Chasede thurgh a champayne oure chevalrous knyghtez, The Romans give chase.
 Tille a cheefe forest, one schalke white horses :
- 1364 Bot a freke alle in fyne golde, and fretted in salle,
 Come forþermaste on a fresone, in flawmande wedes ;
 A faire floreschte spere in fewtyre he castes,
 And folowes faste one owre folke, and freschelye ascryez.
- 1368 Thane *syr* Gawayne the gude appone a graye stede, The foremost of the pursuers is slain by Sir Gawayne.
 He gryppes hym a grete spere, and graythely hym hittez ;
 Thurgh þe guttez in-to the gorre he gyrdes hym ewyne,
 That the groundene stele glydez to his herte !
- 1372 The gome and þe grette horse at þe grounde lyggeþ,
 fulls gryseliche gronande, for grefe of his woundez.
 þane preseþ a preker ine, fulls proudly arayede,
 That beres alle of pourpour, palyde with sylver :
- 1376 Byggly on a broune stede he profers fulls large ;
 He was a Paynyme of Perse þat þus hym persuede. Another knight, a paynim of Persia, by Sir Boys.
 Sir Boys un-abaste alle he buskes hym a-gaynes,
 With a bustous launce he bereþ hym thurgh,
- 1380 þat þe breme and the brade schelde appone þe bente
 lyggeþ !
 And he bryngez furthe the blade, and bownez to his
 felowez.
- Thane *syr* Foltemour of myghte, a man mekylls praysede, Sir Foltemour seeks to avenge Sir Cayous,
 Was moveþ one his manere, and manacede fulls faste ;
- 1384 He graythes to *syr* Gawayne graythely to wyrche,
 ffor grefe of *syr* Gayous, þat es one grounde levede.
 Thane *syr* Gawayne was glade ; agayne hym he rydez,
 Wyth Galuth his gude swerde graythely hym hytteþ ;
- 1388 The knyghte one þe coursere he clevede in sondyre,
 Glenlyche fro þe croune his corse he dyvysyde,
 And þus he killeþ þe knyghte with his kydd wapens !
 Than a ryche mans of Rome relyede to his byerns,—
- 1392 " It salls repent us fulls sore and we ryde forthire !
 þone are bolde bosturs, þat syche bale wyrkez ;
 It befelle hym fulls foule, þat þame so fyrste namede."
- but Sir Gawaine cleaves him asunder.
- Then a rich man of Rome suggests a retreat.

42 THE ROMANS ARE FIRST DRIVEN BACK, AND THEN REINFORCED.

The rich Romans
return,

Thane þe riche Romayns retournes þaire brydilles
1396 To þaire tentis in tene, telles theire lordez
How *syr* Marschalle de Mowne es on þe monte lefede,
ffore-justyde at that journee, for his grett japez.
Bot thare chazez one oure mene chevallrous knyghtez,

but five thousand
horsemen still
pursue the
knights,

1400 ffyve thosande folke appone faire stedes,
ffaste to a foreste one a felle watyr,
That fillez fro þe falow see fyfty myle large.

and fall upon
an ambush of
Bretons,

There ware Bretons enbuschide, and banerettez noble,
1404 Of þe chevalrye cheefe of þe kynggez chambyre,
Seese theme chase oure mene, and changene þeire horsez,
And choppe doun cheftaynes, that they moste chargyde ;
Thane þe embuschement of Bretons brake owte at ones,
1408 Brothely at banere, and Bedwyne knyghtez,
Arrestede of þe Romayns, þat by þe fyrthe rydez,
Alle þe realeste renkes þat to Rome lengez ;
Thay iche on þe enmyse and egerly strykkys,

who break out
suddenly on
them,

with shouts of
"Arthur."

1412 Erles of Inglande, and Arthure ascryes,
Thrughe brenes and bryghte schelde, brestez they thyrl,
Bretons of the boldeste with theire bryghte swerde ;
There was Romayns over redyne, and ruydly wondyde,
1416 Arrestede as rebawdez, with ryotous knyghttez !

The Romans are
defeated and
driven back,

The Romaynes owte of araye removede at ones,
And rydes awaye in a rowtte, for reddoure it semys !
To þe senatour Petyr a sandes-mane es commyne,
1420 And saide, "*Syr*, sekyrly, þour seggez are supprysside !"

but the Senator
Peter sends ten
thousand men.

Than tene thowsande mene he semblede at ones,
And sett sodanly one oure seggez, by þe salte strandez ;
Than ware Bretons abaiste, and grevede a lyttile,

1424 Bot þit the banerettez bolde, and bachellers noble,
Brekes that batailles with brestez of stedes ;

The Bretons are
repulsed, and

Sir Boice and his bolde mene myche bale wyrkes !
The Romaynes redyes þane, arrayez þame better,
1428 And al to-ruscheez oure mene with theire ryste horsez,
Arestede of the richeste of þe rounde table,
Over-rydez oure rerewarde, and grette rewthe wyrkes !

- Thane þe Bretons on þe bente habyddez no lengere,
- 1432 Bot fleede to þe foreste, and the feelde levede ; fly to the forest.
 Sir Berylle es borne downe and syr Boice taken, Sir Beryll is borne
down and Sir
Bois taken,
 The beste of oure bolde menȝ unblythely wondyde ;
 Bot ȝitt oure stale onȝ a strenghe stotais a lyttill, but again they
make a little
stand,
- 1436 Alle to-stonayed with þe strokes of þa steryne knyghtez ;
 Made sorowe fore theire soveraygne, that so þare was grieving for the
loss of their
leader, and pray
for succour.
 nomene,
 Be-soughte Gode of socure, sende whene hym lykyde !
 Than commez syr Idrus, armede up at alle ryghttez,
- 1440 Wyth fyve hundrethe menȝ appone faire stedes, Sir Idrus, with
five hundred
men, come to
their aid.
 ffrayneȝ faste at oure folke freschely þare aftyre,
 ȝif þer frendez ware ferre, þat onȝ the felde foundide.
 Thane sais syr Gawayne, "so me God helpe !
- 1444 We hafe bene chased to daye, and chulled as hares, Sir Gawaine la-
ments the check
which Arthur's
men had re-
ceived.
 Rebuyked with Romaynes appone þeire ryche stedeȝ,
 And we lurkede undyr lee as lowrande wrechȝ !
 I luke never onȝ my lorde þe dayes of my lyfe,
- 1448 And we so lytherly hym helpe, þat hymȝ so wele lykede !" The British re-
turn to the fray.
 Thane the Bretons brothely brochez theire stedeȝ,
 And boldly in batelle appone þe bent rydes ;
 Alle þe ferse menȝ be-fore frekly ascryes,
- 1452 fferkand in þe foreste, to freschene þame selfene ;
 The Romaynes thanȝ redyly arrayes themȝ bettyre, The Romans pre-
pare themselves
against them.
 Onȝ rawe on a rowm-felde, reghttez theire wapyns,
 By þe ryche revare, and rewles þe pople ;
- 1456 And with reddour syr Boice es in areste haldene.
 Now thei semlede unsaughte by þe salte strandez ;
 Gladly theis sekere menȝ settys þeire dynttez,
 With lufly launceȝ onȝ lofte they luyshene to-gedyres,
- 1460 In Lorayne so lordlye on leppande stedes ;
 Thare ware gomes thurghe girde with grundynȝ wapynes, A fierce battle
ensues.
 Grisely gayspande with grucchande lotes !
 Grete lordes of Greke greffede so hye ;
- 1464 Swyftly with swerdes, they swappene there-aftyre,
 Swappeȝ dounȝ fullȝ sweperlye swelltande knynghtez,

- That alle swelltez one swarthe, that they *over* swyngene,
 Se many sweys in swoghe swounande att ones !
- Sir Gawaine does 1468 Syr Gawayne the gracyous full~~e~~ graythelye he wyrkkes,
 mighty deeds of valour. The gretteste he gretez wyth gryeslye wondes ;
 Wyth Galuth he gyrdez doun~~e~~ full~~e~~ galyarde knyghtez,
 ffore greefe of þe grett lorde so grymlye he strykez !
- 1472 He rydez furthe ryallye and redely there-aftyre,
 Thare this reall~~e~~ renke was in areste haldene ;
 He ryfyz y~~e~~ raunke stele, he ryghttez þeire brenez,
 And reste them~~e~~ thereyche mane, and rade to his strengthes,
- The Senator Peter 1476 The senatour Petur thane persewede hym~~e~~ aftyre,
 comes against him, Thurghe þe presse of þe peple, wyth his pryce knyghttes ;
 Appertly fore þe prysonere proves his strengthes,
 Wyth prekers the proudeste that to þe presse lengez ;
- 1480 Wrothely one the wrange hande *syr* Gawayne he strykkes,
 Wyth a wapen~~e~~ of were unwynely hym~~e~~ hittez ;
 The breny one þe bakhalfe he brystez in sondyre !
 Bot ȝit he broghte forthe *syr* Boyce, for alle þeire bale
 he biernez !
- but in spite of 1484 Thane þe Breton~~e~~s boldely braggene þeire tromppez,
 him Sir Gawaine the British press on more boldly. And fore blysse of *syr* Boyce was broghte owtte of bandez,
 Boldely in batelle they þere doun~~e~~ knyghtes ;
 With brandes of broune stele they brettene~~d~~ maylez ;
- 1488 þay stekede stedys in stoure with stelene wapynes,
 And alle stowede wyth strenghe, þat stode them~~e~~ agaynes !
 Sir Idrus fitz Ewayne þane Arthur ascryeez,
 Assemblez one þe senatour wyth sextene knyghttez,
- 1492 Of þe sekereste mene þat to oure syde lengede ;
 Sodanly in a soppe they sette in att ones,
 ffoynes faste att þe fore breste with flawmande swerdez,
 And feghttes faste att þe fronte freschely þare aftyre ;
- 1496 ffelles fele on þe felde appone þe ferrere syde,
 ffey on þe faire felde by þa fresche strandez ;
 Bot *syr* Idrus fytz Ewayne anters hym~~e~~ selvene,
 And entters in anly, and egyrly strykez,
- 1500 Sekez to þe senatour and sesez his brydille,

Unsaughtely he saide hym these fittande wordes,—

“ȝelde þe, *syr*, ȝapely, ȝife þou þi lyfe ȝerneȝ,
ffore gyftez þat þow gyffe may, þou ȝeme now þe selfene;

and takes him
prisoner.

- 1504 ffore dredlez dreche þow, or droppe any wyleȝ,
Thow salle dy þis daye thorow dyntt of my handez!”
“I ascente,” *quod* þe *senatour*, “so me Criste helpe!

So þat I be safe broghte before the kynges selvene;

The Senator de-
sires to be
brought to the
king.

- 1508 Raunsons me resonabyllye, as I may over reche,
Aftyre my renttez in Rome may redyly forthire.”

Thane answers *syr* Idrus with austeryne wordes,

Sir Idrus answers
him roughly.

“Thow salle hafe condycyons, as the kynges lykes,

- 1512 Whene thow comes to þe kyth there the *courte* haldez;
In caase his concelle bee to kepe the no langere,
To be killyde at his commandment his knyghttez be-fore.”
payledde hym furthe in þe rowte, and lached ofe his wedes,

- 1516 Lefte hym wyth Lyonelle, and Lowelle hys brothire,
O-lawe in þe launde þane, by þe lythe strandez.

He gives the
Senator into the
charge of Sir
Lionel and Sir
Lowell.

Sir Lucius legge-mene loste are fore ever!

The *senatour* Petur es prysoner takyne!

- 1520 Of Perce and of Porte Jaffe fulle many price knyghtez,
And myche pople wyth alle, perischede þame selfene!
ffor presse of þe passage, they plunged at oneȝ!

Thare myghte mene see Rōmaynez rewfully wondyde,

Many of the
Romans are
slain.

- 1524 Over-redyne with renkes of the round table!

In þe raikē of þe furthe they rightene theire brenys,

þat rane alle one reede blode redyllye alle over;

They raughte in þe rerewarde fulle ryotous knyghtez,

- 1528 ffor raunsons of rede golde and realle stedys;

Radly relayes, and restez theire horseȝ,

In rowtte to þe ryche kyng they rade al at oneȝ.

The knights ride
back towards the
king, and send
him the news of
their success.

A knyghte cayrez be-fore, and to þe kynges telles,—

- 1532 “Sir, here commez thy messangerez with myrtheȝ fro
þe mountez,

pay hafe bene machede to daye with mene of þe marchez,

ffore-maglade¹ in þe marras with mervailous knyghtez!

¹ Halliwell reads “fore mangled.”

They tell him
that they have
slain fifty thou-
sand men,

and taken pri-
soners the chief
Chancellor and
the Senator Pe-
ter, as well as
many paynims.

Arthur may de-
mand sixty
horse-loads of
silver for the
Senator,

and for the Chan-
cellor, chariots
full of gold.

The other pri-
soners may be
kept until their
rents are known.

All Arthur's men
had escaped, save
Sir Ewayne, who
was wounded.

The king rejoices.

The fate of battle,
he says, is in the
hands of God.

He thanks the
knight for his
tidings, and gives
him for reward
the city of Tho-
louse.

We hafe foughtene in faithe, by þone fresche strandez,
1536 With þe frekkeste folke that to þi foo langez;
ffyfty thosaunde one felde of ferse menē of armez,
Wyth-in a furlange of waye, fay ere by-lefede!
We hafe eschewede þis chekke, thurgh the chance of oure
Lorde,

1540 Of tha chevalrous menē that chargede thy pople!
The cheefe chaunchelere of Rome, a cheftayne fullē noble,
Wille aske þe chartyre of pesse for charitee hym selfenē;
And the senatour Petire to presone es takyne.

1544 Of Perse and of Porte Jaffe Paynymmez ynewe
Comez prekande in the presse, with thy prysse knyghttez,
With poverte in thi presone theire paynez to drye;
I be-seke þow, sir, say whate þowe lykes,

1548 Whethire þe suffyre themē saughte, or some delyverde:
þe may have fore þe senatour sextie horse chargede
Of silver be Seterdaye, fullē sekyrly payede,
And for þe cheefe chaunchelere, þe chevalere noble,

1552 Charottes chokkefulle charegyde with golde;
The remenaunt of þe Romayne be in areste haldens,
Tille thiere renttez in Rome be rightewissly knawens.
I be-seke þow, sir, certyfyte þone lordez,

1556 ȝif þe wille send þame over þe see, or kepe þame þourselfenē:
Alle þour sekyre menē forsothe sounde are by-levyde,
Save syr Ewayne fytz Henry es in þe side wonddede."
"Crist be thankyde," quod the kyng, "and hys clere
modyre,

1560 That þowe comforthede and helpede be crafte of hymē
selfene;

Skilfulle skomfyture he skifte as hym lykez,
Is none so skathlye may skape, ne skewe fro his handes;
Desteny and doughtynes of dedys of armes,

1564 Alle es demyd and delte at Dryghtynez wille!
I kwnē the thanke for thy come, it comfortes us alle!
Sir knyghte," sais þe conquerour, "so me Criste helpe!
I ȝif the for thy thyzandez Tolouse þe riche,

- 1568 The tolle and þe tachmentez, tavernez and oþer,
The towne and the tenementez with towrez so hye,
That towchez to the temperalte, whilles my tyme lastez :
Bot say to the senatour I sende hym þes wordez,
- 1572 Thare salls no silver hym save, bot Ewayne recovere ;
I had lever see hym synke one the salte strandez,
Than the seegge ware seke, þat es so sore woundede ;
I salls dissevere that sorte, so me Criste helpe !
- 1576 And sett theme fulle solytarie, in sere kynggez landez :
Salls he never sownde see his seynowres in Rome,
Ne sitt in þe assemblé, in syghte wyth his feris ;
ffor it comes to no kyng þat conquerour es holdene,
- 1580 To comons with his captifis fore covatys of silver :
It come never of knyghthede, knawe it þif hym lyke,
To carpe of coseri, whene captyfis ere takyne ;
It aughte to no presoners to prese no lordez,
- 1584 Ne come in presens of prynces, whene partyes are movede :
Comaunde þone constable, þe castelle þat þemes,
That he be clenlyche kepede, and in close haldene ;
He salls have maundement to morne or myddaye be
roungene,
- 1588 To what marche þay salls merke, with mangere to lengene."
þay conwaye this captyfe with clene mene of armez,
And kend hym to þe constable, alles þe kyngze byddez ;
And seyne to Arthure þey ayre, and egerly hym towchez
- 1592 The answer of þe emperour, irows of dedez.
Thane syr Arthure one erthe, atheliste of oþere,
At evene at his awene borde avantid his lordez,—
"Me aughte to honour theme in erthe over alle oþer
thynggez,
- 1596 þat þus in myne absens awnters þeme selfene ;
I salls theme luffe whylez I lyffe, so me our Lorde helpe !
And gyfe þeme landys fulle large, whare theme beste
lykes ;
Thay salls noghte lesse, one þis layke, þif me lyfe happene,
- 1600 þat þus are lamede for my lufe be þis lythe strandez."

The Senator shall
not be ransomed
save Sir Ewayne
recovers.

The others shall
be divided into
different coun-
tries.

Arthur holds that
to accept ransom
becomes not a
king.

They are to take
the Senator to
the Constable and
bid him keep him
safe.

The knights
obey, and then
return to Arthur
to give him the
Emperor's mes-
sage.

Arthur greatly
commends his
knights for their
boldness, and
promises them
rewards.

In the morning
Sir Cadore and his
knights are bid
to take the pri-
soners

Bot in þe clere daweyng, þe dere kynge hyme selfene
Comaundyd *syr* Cadore with his dere knyghttes,
Sir Cleremus, sir Cleremonde, with clene mene of armez,
1604 Sir Clowdmur, *syr* Clegis, to conuaye theis lordes ;
Sir Boyce and *syr* Berelle with baners displayede,
Sir Bawdwyne, *syr* Bryane, and *syr* Bedwere the ryche,
Sir Raynalde and *syr* Richere, Rawlaundes childyre,

to Paris, and to
give them into
the care of the
Provost.

1608 To ryde with þe Romaynes in rowte wyth their feres.

“Prekez now preualye to Paris the ryche,
Wyth Petir the pryssonere and his price knyghttez ;
Be-teche þam þe proveste, in presens of lordes,

1612 O payne and o perelle þat pendes there too,
That they be weisely wachede and in warde holdene,
Warded of warantizez with wurchipfull knyghttez ;
Wagge hyme wyghte mene, and woonde for no silvyre ;

1616 I haffe warnede þat wy, be ware iife hyme lykes!”

Now bownes þe Bretones, als þe kynge byddez,
Buskez their batelles, their baners displayez ;
To-wardez Chartris they chese, these chevalrous
knyghttez,

The British
knights depart
towards Chartres.

1620 And in the champayne lande full faire þay eschewed :
ffor þe emperour of myghte had ordande hym selfene
Sir Utolfe and sir Ewandyre, two honorable kynges,
Erles of þe Orient, with austeryne knyghttez,

But the Emperor
had dispatched a
chosen band to
intercept them.

1624 Of þe awntrousete mene þat to his oste lengede,
Sir Sextynour of Lyby and Senatours many,
The kynge of Surrye hym-selfe with Sarazynes ynewe,
The senatour of Sutere wyth sowmes full huge,

1628 Whas assygnede to þat courte be sent of his peres,
Traise to-warde Troys þe tresone to wyrke,
To hafe be-trappede with a trayneoure travelande
knyghttez,

That hade persayfede þat Peter at Parys sulde lenge,

1632 In prersonne with þe provoste, his paynez to drye.
ffor-thi they buskede them bowne with baners dis-
playede,

- In the buskayle of his waye, on blonkkes fullē hugge ;
 Planttez themē in the pathe with powere arrayede,
 1636 To pyke up þe presoners fro oure pryse knyghttez.
 Syr Cadore of Cornewalle comaundeþ his peris,
 Sir Clegis, *syr* Cleremus, *syr* Cleremownde þe
 noble,
 "Here es þe close of Clyme with clewes so hye ;
 1640 Lokez the contree be clere, the corners are large ;
 Discoveres now sekerly skrogges and oþer,
 That no skathelle in þe skroggez skorne us here aftyre ;
 Loke þe skyste it so þat us no skathe lympe,
 1644 ffor na skomfitoure in skoulkery is skomfite ever."
 Now they hye to þe holte, thes harageous knyghttez,
 To herkene of þe hye mene to helpene theis lordes ;
 ffyndez themē helmede hole and horsesyde on stedys,
 1648 Hovande one þe hye waye by þe holte heftimes.
 With knyghttly contenance Sir Clegis hym selfene
 Kryes to þe companye, and carpes thees wordez,—
 "Es there any kyde knyghte, kaysere or oþer,
 1652 Wille kyth for his kyngē lufe craftes of armes ?
 We are comene fro the kyng of þis lythe ryche,
 That knawene es for conquerour, corownde in erthe,
 His ryche retenuz here alle of his round table,
 1656 To ryde with þat realle in rowtte where hymē lykes ;
 We seke justynges of werre, ȝif any wille happyne,
 Of þe jolyeste mene a-juggede be lordes ;
 If here be any hathelle mane, erle or oþer,
 1660 That for þe emperour lufe wille awntere hym-selfene."
 And ane erle þane in angerd answeres hym sone,—
 "Me angers at Arthure, and att his hathelle bierns,
 That thus in his errour occupyes theis rewmes ;
 1664 And owtrayes þe emperour, his erthely lorde !
 The araye and þe ryalltez of þe rounde table
 Es wyth rankour rehersedē in rewmes fullē many ;
 Of oure renttez of Rome syche revellē he haldys,
 1668 Ne sallē ȝife resounē fullē rathe, ȝif us reghte happene,

They take up a position in the path of Arthur's men.

Sir Cadore keeps a sharp look out,

and discovers the enemy, armed and mounted, waiting by the skirts of a wood.

Sir Clegis challenges any knight among them to the combat.

An earl of the Roman party upbraids Arthur and his knights.

Sir Clegis glorifies Arthur,

That many salla repente that in his rowtte rydez,
ffor the reklesse roy so rewlez hym-selfene!"

"A!" sais *syr* Clegis þane, "so me Criste helpe!

1672 I knowe be thi carpyng a cowntere þe semes!

Bot be þou auditoure or erle, or emperour thi-selfene,
Appone Arthurez by-halve I answeze the sone:
The renke so realle, þat rewleze us alle,

and boasts that he will punish well the Romans.

1676 The ryotous mene and þe ryche of þe rounde table,
He has araysede his accownte, and redde alle his rollez,
ffor he wyлле gyfe a rekenyng that rewe salla aftyre,
That alle þe ryche salla repente þat to Rome langez,

He desires three courses of war with any knights whom they will send.

1680 Or þe rereage be requit of rentez þat he claymez! .

We crafe of þour curtaisie three coursez of werre,
And claymez of knyghthode, take kepe to þour selfene!
þe do bott trayne us to daye wyth trofelande wordez!

1684 Of syche travaylande mene trecherye me thynkes!

Sende owte sadly certayne knyghtez,
Or say me sekerly sothe, for sake þif þowe lykes."

The King of Syria insinuates that Sir Clegis may not be of noble ancestry.

Thane sais þe kynge of Surry, "Alls save me oure Lorde!
1688 þif þow hufe alle þe daye, þou bees noghte delyverede,

Bot thow sekerly ensure with certayne knyghtez,
þat þi cote and thi breste be knowene with lordez,
Of armes of ancestrye entyrde with londez."

1692 "Sir kyng," sais *syr* Clegys, "fulle knyghttly þow askez:

Sir Clegis replies scornfully that his ancestors were at the siege of Troy.

I trowe it be for cowardys thow carpes thes wordez:
Mynе armez are of ancestrye enveryde with lordez,
And has in banere bene borne sene *syr* Brut tyme;

1696 At the cité of Troye þat tymme was ensegede,
Ofte seene in asawte with certayne knyghttez,
ffro þe Borghte broghte us and alle oure bolde elders,
To Bretayne þe braddere, with-in chippe-burdez."

Sir Sextemour declares that the Romans are ready for the fray.

1700 "Sir," sais *syr* Sextenour, "saye what þe lykez,
And we salla suffyre the, als us beste semes;
Luke thi troumppez be trussede, and trofull no lengere,
ffor þoghe þou tarye alle þe daye, the tyddes no bettyr!

- 1704 ffor there salle never Romaine, þat in my rowt rydez,
 Be *with* rebawdez rebuykyde, whills I in werlde regne!"
 Thane *syr* Clegis to þe kyng a lyttile enclinede,
 Kayres to *syr* Cadore, and knyghtly hym tellez,—
- 1708 "We have foundene in þone firthe, floreschede with leves,
 þe flour of þe faireste folke þat to þi foo langez,
 fifty thosandez of folke of ferse mene of armez,
 þat faire are fewteride on frounte undyr þone fre-bowes;
 1712 They are enbuschede one blonkkes, with baners displayede,
 In þone bechene wode appone the waye sydes;
 They hafe the furthe forsette alle of þe faire watyre,
 That fayfully of force feghte us byhowys;
- 1716 ffor thus us schappes to daye, shortly to telle,
 Whedyre we schone or schewe, schyst as þe lykes."
 "Nay," *quod* Cadore, "so me Criste helpe!
 It ware schame þat we scholde schone for so lyttyle!"
- 1720 Sir Lancelott salle never laughe, þat with þe kyng
 lengez,
 That I sulde lette my waye for lede appone erthe;
 I salle be dede and undone ar I here dreche,
 ffor drede of any dogge-sonne in þone dyme schawes!"
- 1724 **S**yr Cadore thane knyghtly comforthes his pople,
 And with corage kene he karpes þes wordes,—
 "Thynk one þe valyaunt prynce þat vesettez us ever,
 With landez and lordscheppez, whare us beste lykes;
- 1728 That has us ducheres delte, and dubbyde us knyghttez,
 Gifene us gersoms and golde, and gardwynes many;
 Grewhoundes and grett horse, and alkyne gamnes,
 That gaynez till any gome, that undyre God benez;
- 1732 Thynke one riche renoune of þe rounde table,
 And late it never be refte us fore Romaine in erthe;
 ffeyne þow noghte feyntly, ne frythes no wapyns,
 Bot luke þe fyghte faythefully, frekes þour-selfene;
- 1736 I walde be wellyde alle qwyke, and quarterde in sondre,
 Bot I wyrke my dede, whils I in wrethe lenge."
- Sir Clegis tells Sir Cadore that a vast number of the enemy are drawn up in the wood,
- and suggests a retreat.
- Sir Cadore scorns to retreat.
- Never shall Sir Lancelot laugh at him.
- He will die before he turn back for any dog's son of them all.
- Sir Cadore exhorts his men, and tells them of the good deeds of Arthur.

He dubs some of
them knights.

To certain of
them he gives
the prisoner in
charge.

If he is defeated,
they are to con-
vey him to some
castle, or to Ar-
thur.

The British pre-
pare for the fight.

The fight begins.

The King of Lebe
leads on the
enemy.

He attacks Sir
Beryll and slays
him.

- Than this doughtty duke dubbyd his knyghttez,
Joneke and Askanere, Aladuke and oþer,
1740 That ayerez were of Esexe, and alle þase este marchez ;
Howelle and Hardelfe, happy in armez,
Sir Herylle and sir Herygalle, þise harageouse knyghttez :
Than the soverayne assignede certayne lordez,
1744 Sir Wawayne, syr Uryelle, Sir Bedwere þe riche,
Raynalde and Richeere, and Rowlandez chilydre,—
“Takez kepe one this prynce with þoure price knyghtez,
And þise we in þe stour withstondens the better,
1748 Standez here in this stede, and stirrez no forthire ;
And þif þe chaunce falle þat we bee over-charggede,
Eschewes to some castelle, and chewyse þour-selfene ;
Or ryde to þe riche kyng þif þow roo happyne,
1752 And bidde hym come redily to rescewe hys biernez.”
And than the Bretons brothely enbrassez þeire scheldez,
Braydez one bacenetez, and buskes theire launcez.
Thus he fittez his folke, and to þe felde rydez,
1756 fff hundreth one a frounte fewtrede at onez !
With trompes þay trine, and trappede stedes,
With cornettes and clarions, and clergialle notes ;
Schokkes in with a schakke, and schontez no langere,
1760 There schawes ware scheene undyr þe schire eynez.
And thane the Romainez rowtte remowes a lyttill,
Raykes with a rerewarde þas realle knyghttez ;
So raply þay ryde thare, that alle þe rowte rynggez,
1764 Of ryves and raunke stele, and ryche golde maylez ;
Thane schotte owtte of þe schawe schilttrounis many,
With scharpe wapynes of ware schotande at ones :
The kyng of Lebe be-fore the wawarde he ledez,
1768 And alle his lele lige mene o laundone ascriez :
Thane this cruelle kyng castis in fewtire,
Kaghte hym a coverde horse, and his course haldez,
Beris to syr Berille, and brathely hym hittes,
1772 Throwghe golet and gorgere he hurtez hym ewyne !
The gome and þe grette horse at þe grounde liggez,

- And gretez graythely to Gode, and gyffes hym þe saule!
 Thus es Berelle the bolde broghte owtte of lyve,
- 1776 And byddez aftyre Beryelle, þat hym beste lykez.
 And thane *syr* Cador of Cornewayle es carefull in herte, Sir Cador is overwhelmed with grief for his loss.
 Be-cause of his kynyse mane, þat þus es myscaryede;
 Umbeclappes the cors, and kyssez hym ofte,
- 1780 Gerte kepe hym coverte with his clere knyghttez.
 Thane laughs the Lebe kyng, and alle on lowde meles,— The King of Lebe ridicules him.
 “þone lorde es lyghttde! me lykes the bettyre!
 He salle noghte dere us to daye, the devyll have [his]
 bones!”
- 1784 “þone kyng,” said Cador, “karpes full large,
 Be-cause he killyd þis kene; Criste hafe þi saule!
 He salle hafe corne bote, so me Criste helpe! Sir Cador vows vengeance.
 Or I kaire of þis coste, we salle encontre ones!
- 1788 So may þe wynde weile turne, I quytte hym or ewyne,
 Sothely hym selfene, or summe of his ferez!”
 Thane *syr* Cador þe kene knyghttly he wyrkez,
 Cryez, “A! Cornewale,” and castez in fewtere,
- 1792 Girdez streke thourghe þe stour on a stede ryche! He enacts great deeds of valour.
 Many steryne mane he steride by strenghe of hyme one!
 Whene his spere was sprongene, he spede hym full þerne, When his lance is broken he fights with his sword.
 Swappede owtte with a swerde, that swykede hym never,
- 1796 Wroghte wayes full wyde, and wounded knyghttez;
 Wyrkez his in wayfare full werkand sydez,
 And hewes of þe hardieste halsez in sondyre,
 That alle blendez with blode thare his blanke rynnez!
- 1800 So many biernez the bolde broughte owt of lyfe,
 Titzet tirauntez doun, and temez theire sadilles,
 And turnez owte of þe toile, whene hym tyme thynkkez!
 Thane the Lebe kyng criez full lowde Then the King of Lebe ironically praises his deeds.
- 1804 One *syr* Cador the kene, with cruelle wordes,
 Thowe hase wyrchipe wonne, and wondyde knyghttez!
 Thowe wenes fore thi wightenez the werlde es thynowene!
 I salle wayte at thyne honnde, wy, be my trowthe!
- 1808 I have warnede þe wele, beware þif the lykez!”

The new-made
knights, with
sound of trum-
pets and spears
in rest, rush to
the fray.

With cornuse and clariones þeis newe made knyghttez
Lythes un-to þe crye, and castez in fewtire;
fferkes in one a ffrounte one fferaute stedeze,
1812 fellede at þe fyrste come fyfty att ones!
Schotte thorowe the schiltrouns, and scheverede launcez,
Laid doune in þe lumppe lordly biernez!
Aud thus nobilly oure newe mene notez þeire strenghez.

The King of Lebe
comes against
them.

1816 Bot new notte es onone þat noyes me sore;
The kyng of Lebe has laughte a stede þat hym lykede,
And comes in lordely in lyonez of silvere,
Umbelappez þe lumpe, and lattes in sondre;

He makes great
havoc among the
new men.

1820 Many lede with his launce þe liffe has he refede!
Thus he chaces þe childire of þe kynges chambire,
And killez in þe champanyse chevalrous knyghttez!
With a chasynye spere he choppes doune many!

1824 Thare was syr Alyduke slayne, and Achinour wondyde,
Sir Origge and syr Ermyngalle hewene al to pecez!
And ther was Lewlyne laughte, and Lewlyns brothire,
With lordez of Lebe, and lede to þeire strenghez:

Had not Sir
Clegis and Sir
Clement come,
the new men had
gone to nought.

1828 Ne hade syr Clegis comene, and Clemente þe noble,
Oure newe mene hade gone to noghte, and many ma oper.

Then Sir Cador
puts his lance in
rest, and strikes
the King of Lebe
fair on the hel-
met.

Thane sir Cador the kene castez in fewtire
A cruelle launce and a kene, and to þe kyng rydez,

The heathen king
falls to the
ground mortally
wounded.

1832 Hittez hym heghe one the helme with his harde wapene,
That alle the hotte blode of hym to his hande rynnez!
The hethene harageous kyng appone þe hethe lyggeze,
And of his hertly hurte helyde he never!

Sir Cador tri-
umphs over him.

1836 Thane syr Cador þe kene cryez full lowde,—
“Thow has corne botte, syr kyng, þare God gyfe þe
sorowe,

Thow killyde my cosyne, my kare es the lesse!
Kele the nowe in the claye, and comforthe thi selfene!

1840 Thow skornede us langere with thi skornefull wordez,
And nowe has þow chevede soo; it es thyn awene skathe!
Holde at þow hente has, it harmez bot lyttille,
ffor hethynge es hame holde, use it who so wille.”

- 1844 **T**he kyng of Surry þane es sorowfulle in herte,
 ffor sake of this soveraygne, þat þus was supprisede;
 Semblede his Sarazenes, and senatours manye :
 Unsaughtly þey sette thane appone oure sere knyghttez ;
- 1848 Sir Cadour of Cornewaile he cownterez theme sone,
 With hiis kydde companye clenlyche arrayede ;
 In the frount of þe fyrthe, as þe waye forthis,
 ffyfty thosande of folke was fellide at ones !
- 1852 Thare was at þe assemblé certayne knyghttez,
 Sore wondede sone appone sere halfes ;
 The sekereste Sarzanez that to þat sorte lengede,
 Be-hynde the sadylls ware sette sex fotte large ;
- 1856 They scherde in the schiltrone scheldyde knyghttez,
 Schalkes they schotte thrughe schrenkande maylez,
 Thurghe brenys browdene brestez they thirlede,
 Brasers burnyste bristez in sondyre ;
- 1860 Blasons blode and blankes they hewene,
 With brandez of browne stele brankkand stedeze !
 The Bretones brothely brittenez so many,
 The bente and þe brode felde alle one blode rynnys !
- 1864 Be thane *syr* Cayous þe kene a capitayne has wonnene,
 Sir Clegis clynges in, and clekes anoper ;
 The capitayne of Cordewa, undire þe kynge selfene,
 That was keye of þe kythe of alle þat coste ryche,
- 1868 Utolfe and Ewandre, Joneke had nommene,
 With þe erle of Affryke and oþer grette lordes.
The kyng of Surry the kene to *syr* Cadour es zeldene,
 The Synechalle of Sotere to Segramoure hym selfene.
- 1872 When þe chevalrye saw theire cheftanes were nommene,
 To a cheefe foreste they chesene theire wayes,
 And feledede theme so feynthe, they falle in þe greves,
 In the ferynne of þe fyrthe, fore ferde of oure pople.
- 1876 Thare myght mene see the ryche ryde in the schawes,
 To rype up the Romaynezy ruydlyche wondyde !
 Schowttes aftyre mene, harageous knyghttez,
 Be hundrethez they hewede doune be þe holte eynys !

The King of Syria, full of grief, assembles his Saracens for vengeance.

Sir Cadour and his men slay fifty thousand of them at once.

Certain knights are wounded by Saracens riding behind others.

The fight rages furiously.

The field runs blood.

Sir Clegis takes prisoner the Captain of Cordova.

Sir Cadour takes the King of Syria.

The Romans fly into the forest.

Arthur's men slay many of them there.

- A few escape to
a castle.
- 1880 Thus oure chevalrous men^e chalez þe poþle ;
To a castelle they eschewede a fewe þat eschappede.
Thane relyez þe renkez of þe rounde table,
ffor to ryotte þe wode, þer þe duke restez ;
- Arthur's knights
seek for their
companions who
had been slain.
Sir Cador bids
them carry them
to the King.
- 1884 Ransakes the ryndeþ alle, raughte up theire feres,
That in þe fightyng be-fore fay ware by-levyde.
Sir Cador garte chare theym, and covere theme faire,
Kariede theme to the kyng^e with his beste knyghttez ;
- He goes to Paris
with the pri-
soners, and
quikly returns
to Arthur.
- 1888 And passez un-to Paresche with prasoners hym-selfene,
Betoke theyme the proveste, prynceþ and oþer ;
Tase a sope in the toure, and taryez no langere,
Bot tournes tytte to þe kyng^e, and hym wyth tunge telles.
- Then he tells him
of the case that
had befallen.
- 1892 "Syr," sais syr Cador, "a caas es be-fallene ;
We hafe cownterede to day, in þone coste ryche,
With kyng^ez and kayseres, krouelle and noble,
And knyghtes and kene men clenlyeh arayed !
- 1896 Thay hade at þone foreste forsette us þe wayes,
At the furthe in þe fyrthe, with ferse men^e of armes ;
Thare faughtte we in faythe, and foynede with sperys,
One felde with thy foo mene, and fellyd theme on lyfe.
- They had fought
and slain many.
- 1900 The kyng of Lebe es laide, and in þe felde levyde,
And manye of his lege men^e þat þere to hym langede !
Oþer lordez are laughte of uncouth ledes ;
We hafe lede them at lenge, to lyf whilles þe lykez.
- Divers of their
best knights were
taken prisoners,
- 1904 Sir Utere and syr Ewaynedyre, theis honourable knyghttez,
Be an awntere¹ of armes Joneke has nommene,
With erlez of þe Oryentte, and austerene knyghttez,
Of awncestrye þe beste men^e þat to þe oste langede ;
- the Senator
Barouns, the
King of Syria, the
Seneschall of
Suters.
- 1908 The senatour Barouns es kaughte with a knyghtte,
The capitayne of Cornette, that crewelle es haldene,
The syneschalle of Suters unsaughte wyth þes oþer,
The kyng^e of Surry hym-selfene, and Sarazenes.
- But of Arthur's
knights fourteen
were slain.
- 1912 Bot fay of ours in þe felde a fourtene knyghttez,
I wille noghte feyne ne forbere, but faythfully tellene ;
Sir Berelle es one, a banerette noble,
- Sir Beryl was
killed at the first

¹ Written in MS. a *nawntere*.

- Was killyde at þe fyrste come with a kynges ryche ;
 1916 Sir Alidoyke of Towelle, with his tende knyghtez,
 Emange þe Turkys was tynte, and in tyme fondene ;
 Gude sir Mawrelle of Mauncez, and Mawrens his broþer,
 Sir Meneduke of Mentoche, with mervailous knyghttez."
- 1920 **T**hane the worthy kynges wrythes, and wepede with
 his enghne,
 Karpes to his cosyne *syr* Cador theis wordez,—
 "Sir Cador, thi corage confunde us alle!
 Kowardely thow castez owtte alle my beste knyghttez!
 1924 To putte mene in perille, it es no pryce holdene,
 Bot þe pertyes ware purvayede, and powere arayede ;
 When they ware stade on a strenghe, þou sulde hafe with-stondene,
 Bot þif thowe wolde alle my steryne stroye for þe nonys!"
- 1928 "Sir," sair *syr* Cador, "þe knowe wele þourselvene ;
 þe are kynges in this kythe, karpe whatte þow lykys !
 Salle never upbrayde me, þat to þi burde langes,
 That I sulde blyne for theire boste, thi byddyng to wyrche ;
- 1932 Whene any stirttez to stale, stuffe þame þe bettere,
 Ore thei will be stonayede, and stroyede in þone strayte
 londez.
- I dide my delygens to daye, I doo me one lordez,
 And in daungere of dede fore dyverse knyghttez,
- 1936 I hafe no grace to þi gree, bot syche grett wordez ;
 þif I heven my herte, my hape es no bettyre."
 þofe *syr* Arthure ware angerde, he ansuers faire,
 "Thow has doughttily donne, syr duke, with thi handez,
- 1940 And has donne thy dever with my dere knyghttez ;
 ffor-thy thow arte demyde, with dukes and erlez,
 ffor one of þe doughtyeste þat dubbede was ever !
 Thare es none ischewe of us, on this erthe sprongene ;
- 1944 Thow arte apparant to be ayere, are one of thi childyre ;
 Thow arte my sister sone, for-sake salle I never !"
- T**hane gerte he in his awene tente a table be sette,
 And tryede in with tromppez travailede biernez ;
- 1948 Serfede them solempnely with selkouthe metez,

beginning of the
fray.

Then Arthur was
grieved,

and speaks to his
cousin Sir Cador
bitter words.

Sir Cador replies
with dignity.

He had only done
his duty,

but is ill repaid
by such hard
words.

Then Arthur re-
tracts.
He acknowledges
Cador had done
his devoir.

He was one of
the bravest of the
brave,
and heir apparent
to the throne.
Therefore he
would never for-
sake him.
Then he makes a
noble feast in his
own tent for the
knights who had
been engaged in
the fight.

- But the Senators
of Rome tell the
Emperor of the
defeat of his men. 1952
- He had been be-
trayed by those
he trusted most.
- Then the Em-
peror is very
wroth.
- He assembles a
council of war.
- He tells them his
purpose to go
into Saxony,
- and enter into
Augusta,
- to riot and revel
till the arrival of
Sir Leo and the
Lords of Lom-
bardy.
- King Arthur, get-
ting intelligence
of this, with-
draws his men
secretly by the
woods;
- takes the short-
est road into
Saxony;
- suddenly attacks
the city with
seven bands.
- Sir Valiant makes
a vow to van-
quish the Vis-
count of Rome.
- Swythe semly in syghte with sylverene dischees.
Whene the senatours harde saye þat it so happenede,
They saide to þe emperour, "thi seggez are suppryssede!
Sir Arthure, thyne enmy has owterayed þi lordez,
That rode for þe rescowe of þone riche knyghttez!
Thow dosse bot tynnez þi tyme, and turmenttez þi pople;
Thow arte be-trayed of þi mene, that moste thow on
traystede.
- 1956 That schalle turne the to tene and torfere for ever."
- Than the emperour irus was angerde at his herte,
ffor oure valyant biernez siche prowesche had wonnene.
With kyngs and with kaysere to consayle they wende,
- 1960 Soverayngez of Sarazenez, and senatours manye;
Thus he semblez fulls sone certayne lordez,
And in the assemble thane he sais them theis wordez,—
"My herte sothely es sette, assente jif þowe lykes,
- 1964 To seke into Sexone, with my sekyre knyghttez,
To fyghte with my foo mene, if fortune me happene,
þif I may fynde the freke with-in the foure halvez;
Or entire in-to Awguste awnters to seke,
- 1968 And byde with my balde mene with-in þe burghe ryche;
Riste us and revelle, and ryotte oure selfene,
Lende þare in delytte in lordechippeze ynewe,
To syr Leo be comene with alle his lele knyghtez,
- 1972 With lordez of Lumberdye, to lette hym the wayes."
- Bot owre wyese kyng es warre to wayttene his renkes,
And wyesly by þe woddez voydez his oste;
Gerte felschene his fyrez, flawmande fulls heghe,
- 1976 Trussene fulls traystely, and treunt there aftyre.
Sepene into Sessoyne, he soughte at the gayneste,
And at the surs of þe sonne disseverez his knyghttez:
fforsette theme the cite appone sere halvez,
- 1980 So-daynly on iche halfe, with sevene grett stales.
Anely in the vale a vawewarde enbusches;
Sir Valyant of Vyleris, with valyant knyghttez,
Be-fore þe kynges visage made siche avowez,

- 1984 To venquyse by victorie the vescownte of Rome !
ffor-thi the kyng^e chargez hym, what chaunce so be-falle,
Cheftayne of the cheekke, with chevalrous knyghttez,
And sythyne meles with mouthe, ~~þat~~ he moste traystez :
The King gives him command of the vanguard ;
- 1988 Demenys the medylwarde menskfully hym selfene,
fittes his fote-mene, alles hym faire thynkkes ;
On frounte in the fore breste, the flour of his knyghtez,
His archers on aythere halfe he ordaynede þer-aftyre
he himself directs the centre.
- 1992 To schake in a sheltrone, to schotte whene þame lykez ;
He arrayed in þe rereward fullle rialle knyghtez,
With renkkes renownd of þe rounde table,
Sir Raynalde, sir Richere, that rade was never,
He arranges the archers on either flank,
- 1996 The riche Duke of Rowne wyt ryders ynewe ;
Sir Cayous, sir Clegis, and elene mene of armes,
The kyng castes to kepe be þaa clere strandes.
Sir Lott and syr Launcelott, þise lordly knyghttez,
Places renowned knights for a rearguard.
- 2000 Salle lenge on his lefte hande, wyth legyones ynewe,
To meve in þe morne, while þif þe myste happynne ;
Sir Cador of Cornewaile, and his kene knyghtez,
To kepe at þe Karfuke, to close in ther opere :
Sir Lott and Sir Lancelot command a band on the left hand, which is to move in the mist of early morning.
- 2004 He plantez in sicke placez prynces and erlez,
That no powere sulde passe be no *prevé* wayes.
Sir Cador and his men are to keep guard over the passes.
- Bot the emperour onone, with honourable knyghtez
and erlez, enteres the vale, awnters to seke,
- 2008 And fyndez sir Arthure with hostez arayede ;
And at his in-come, to ekkene his sorowe,
Oure burlyche bolde kyng^e appone the bente howes,
With his bataile one brede, and baners displayede.
The Emperor and his knights quickly enter the vale in search of adventures.
- 2012 He hade þe ceté for-sett appone sere halves,
Bothe the clewez and þe clyfez with elene mene of armez !
The mosse and þe marrasse, the mounnttez so hye,
With gret multytude of mene, to marre hym in þe wayes.
He finds Arthur's host drawn up in battle array,
- 2016 Whene syr Lucius sees, he sais to his lordes,
“ This traytour has truaunt¹ this tresone to wyrche !
He has the ceté forsett appone sere halfez,
and all the positions occupied.
- Then Sir Lucius declares with

¹ Or *trount*.

wrath that there
is no way else but
to fight, for if
he may not.

He arrays his
rich Romans.
The Viscount is
in the van.

Hoists his stand-
ard, the golden
dragon enamelled
with eagles.

They drink and
make merry.

Sir Lucius ex-
horts them to
think on the
great renown of
Rome—how it
had conquered all
Christendom,

and all the land
of the Saracens,
from Jaffa to the
gates of Paradise.

Without doubt
they will quickly
reduce these
rebels.

Arthur calls upon
the Viscount of
Valence, and
threatens him
with vengeance.

The Viscount
boldly prepares
for the fray.

- Alle þe clewez and the cleyffez with clene mene of armez !
 Here es no waye i-wys, ne no wytt elles,
 Bot feghte with oure foo-mene, for flee may we never !
 Thane this ryche mane rathe arayes his byrnez,
 Rowlede his Romayne, and realle knyghtez ;
 Buschez in the awawmewarde the vescuonte of Rome,
 ffro Viterbe to Venyse, theis valyante knyghtez :
 Dresses up dredfully the dragone of golde,
 With egles al-over, enamelede of sable ;
 Drawens dreghely the wyne, and drynkyns thereafter, **2028**
 Dukkez and dusseperez, dubbede knyghtez,
 ffor dauncesyngs of Duchemene, and dynnyngs of pypez,
 Alle dynned fore dyne that in þe dale hovede.
2032 And thane *syr* Lucius on lowde said lordlyche wordez,
 “ Thynke one the myche renownne of þour ryche
 fadyrs ;
 And the riatours of Rome, þat regnede with lordez ;
 And the renkez over rane alle that regnede in erthe,
2036 Enorochede alle Cristyndome be craftes of armes ;
 In everiche a viage the victorie was haldene ;
 In sette alle þe Sarazenes within seven wyntter,
 The parte ffro the Porte Jaffe to Paradyse þatez !
2040 Thoghe a rewme be rebelle, we rekke it bot lyttill !
 It es resone and righte the renke be restreynede !
 Do dresse we tharefore, and byde we no langere,
 ffore dredlesse with-owttyns dowtte, the daye schall be
 ourez ! ”
2044 Whene þeise wordez was saide, the Walsche kyngs hym
 selfene
 Was warre of this wyderwyne, þat werrayed his knyghttez :
 Brothely in the vale with voyce he ascryez,—
 “ Viscownte of Valewnee, envyous of dedys,
2048 The vassalage of Viterbe to daye schall be revengede !
 Unvenquiste for þis place voyde schall I never ! ”
 Thane the vyscownte valiante, with a voyse noble,
 Avoyedyde the awawewarde, enverounde his horse ;

2052 He drissede in a derfe schelde, endenttyd *with* sable,
 With a dragone engowschede, dredfull~~e~~ to schewe,
 Devorande a dolphyne with dolefull~~e~~ lates,
 In seyne that oure soveraygne sulde be distroyede,

His device is a
 dragon devour-
 ing a dolphin.

2056 And alle done of dawez with dynttez of swreddez;
 ffor thare es noghte bot dede thare the dragone es raissede!
 Thane the comlyche kyng~~e~~ castez in fewtyre,
 With a crewelle launce cowpez full~~e~~ evene

Sir Valiant lays
 his lance in rest,
 and pierces him
 through the short
 ribs.

2060 Abowne *þe* spayre a spanne, emange *þe* schortte rybbys,
 That the splent and the spleene on the spere lengez!
 The blode sprente owtte and sprede as *þe* horse sprynggez,
 And he sproulez full~~e~~ spakely, bot spekes he no more!

And thus did he
 redeem his word.

2064 And thus has *syr* Valyant haldene his avowez,
 And venqwyste *þe* viscownte, thate victor was haldene!
 Thane *syr* Ewayne *syr* Fytz Uriene full~~e~~ enkerlye rydez
 Onone to the emperour his egle to towche;

Sir Ewain makes
 a bold attempt to
 reach the Em-
 peror.

2068 Thurghe his brode bataile he buskes be-lyfe,
 Braydez owt his brande *with* a blyth chere,
 Roverssede it redelye, and awaye rydys;
 fferkez in with the fewle in his faire handez,

2072 And ffittez in freely one ffrounte *with* his feris.
 Now buskez *syr* Lancelot, and braydez full~~e~~ evene
 To *syr* Lucius the lorde, and lothelye hyme hyttez;
 Thurghe pawnce *and* platez he percede the maylez,

Sir Lancelot slays
 the Lord Lucius.

2076 That the prowde penselle in his pawnche lengez!
 The hede hayled~~e~~ owtt be-hynde ane halfe fote large,
 Thurghe hawberke and hanche, *with* *þe* harde wapyne!
 The stede and the steryne mane strykes to *þe* grownde,

2080 Strake downe a standerde, and to his stale wendez!
 "Me lykez wele," sais *syr* Loth, "þone lordez are dely-
 verede!

Sir Lott rejoices
 that his turn is
 now come.

The lott lengez nowe on me, *with* leve of my lorde:
 To day salls my name be laide, and my life aftyre,

2084 Bot some leppe fro the lyfe, that one þone lawnde hovez!"
 Thane strekez the steryne, and streynys his brydylle,
 Strykez in-to the stowre on a stede ryche,

- He slays a giant, Enjoynede with a geaunt, and jaggede hym thorowe !
 2088 Jolyly this gentille for-justede anoþer,
 Wroghte wayes fullē wyde, werrayande knyghtez,
 And wondes alle wathely, that in þe waye stondez !
 ffyghttez wīth alle the ffrappe a furlange of waye,
 and many war- 2092 ffelled fele appone felde wīth his faire wapene,
 riors beside. Venqwiste and has the victorie of valyaunt knyghtez,
 And alle enverounde the vale, and voyde whene hym
 likede !
- The British bow- Thane bowmens of Bretayne brothely ther-aftyre
 men discharge 2096 Bekerde wīth bregaundez of ferre in tha laundez,
 their arrows. With flonez fletereðe þay flitt fullē frescly þer frekez,
 ffichene wīth fetheris thurghe þe fyne maylez :
 Sithe flyttynges es foule that so the flesche derys,
 2100 That flowe o ferrome in flawnkkes of stedeðz ;
 The Dutchmen Dartes the Duche-mene dalterne aȝaynes,
 throw darts. With derfe dynttez of dede, dagges thurghe scheldeðz ;
 Qwarelles qwayntly swappeðz thorowe knyghtez
 2104 With iryne so wekyrly, that wynche they never.
 So they schérenkene fore schotte of þe scharppe arowes,
 That all the scheltrone schonte, and schoderide at ones !
 Thane riche stedes rependeðz, and rasches one armes ;
 Many are slain 2108 The hale howndrethe one hye appone heyghe lygges,
 by the sharp Bot zitte þe hathelieste on hy, haythene and oþer ;
 arrows. All hoursches over hede harmes to wyrke.
 And alle theis geauntez be-fore, engenderide wīth fendeðz,
 But the giants 2112 Joynez on sir Jenitalle, and gentille knyghtez,
 make a terrible With clubbez of clene stele clenkkede in helmes,
 charge, Graschede dounē cresteðz, and craschede brayneðz ;
 Kyllede couers and coverde stedes,
 and with their 2116 Choppode thurghe chevalers one chalke-whyte stedeðz.
 ironclubs destroy Was never stele ne stede myghte stande them aȝayneðz,
 many cavaliers Bot stonays and strykez dounē, that in þe stale hovys.
 on white steeds. Tille þe conquerour come with his kene knyghttez,
 2120 Wīth crowelle contenaunce he cryede fullē lowde,—
 “I wende no Bretouns walde bee basschede for so lyttillē,
- Nothing can stand against them until Ar-
 thur comes.
- He despises them,

And fore bare-legyde boyes, þat one the bente hovys!"

- 2124 **H**e clekys owtte Collbrande full̃ clenlyche burneschte,
Graythes hyme to Golapas, þat grevyde moste;
Kuttes hyme eveñ by þe knees clenly in sondyre.

and plucking out
Colbrand, quickly
cuts the giant
Golapas in two
at the knees;

"Come downe," *quod* the kyng, "and karpe to thy ferys!

Thowe arte to hye by þe halfe, I hete þe in trouthe!

telling him "he
was too high by
half." Then he
strikes off his
head.

- 2128 Thowe sall̃ be handsomere hye, with þe helpe of my
Lorde!"

With þat steleñ brande he strake ofe his hede.

Sterylnly in þat stoure he strykes anoþer.

Thus he settez on seveñ with his sekyre knyghttez :

He and his
knights slay
sixty giants.

- 2132 Whylles sixty ware servede soo, ne sessode they never!

And thus at the joyenyge the geauntez are dystroyede,

And at þat journey for-justede with gentille lordez.

Than the Romaynes, and the renkkes of þe rounde table,

The Romans rally
and make a fierce
resistance.

- 2136 Rewles them in arraye, rerewarde ande oþer,

With wyghte wapynez of werre, thay wroghteñ one
helmes,

Rittez with rennke stele full̃ ryalle maylez ;

Bot they fut them̃ fayre, thes frekk byernez,

- 2140 ffewters in freely one fferaunte stedes,

ffoynes full̃ felly with flyschande speris,

ffretene of orfrayes feste appone scheldez.

So fele fay es in fyghte appone þe felde levyde,

Many men are
slain. Rivers of
blood run into
the sea.

- 2144 That iche a furthe in the firthe of rede blode rynnys!

By that swyftely one swarthe þe swett es bylevede,

Swerdez swangeñ in two, sweltand knyghtez

Lyes wyde opyñ welterande one walopande stedez ;

- 2148 Wondes of wale meñ werkande sydys,

ffacez fetteled unfaire in filterede lakes,

All̃ craysed for-trodyne with trappede stedez,

The faireste fygyred folde that fygyrede was ever,

- 2152 Alles ferre alles a furlange, a thosande at ones!

Be than the Romayne warre rebuykyde a lyttill̃,

With-drawes theym̃ drerely, and dreches no lengare ;

The Romans be-
gin to retreat,
and Arthur
presses on them.

Oure prynce with his powere persewes theym̃ aftyre,

- 2156 Prekez one þe proudeste with his price knyghttez.
 Sir Kayous, sir Clegis, with clene mene of armez,
 Encontres them at þe elyffe with clene mene of armez;
 ffyghttes faste in þe fyrth, frythes no wapene,
 ffelled at þe firste come fyfe hundrethe at ones!
 And when they fande theym foresett with oure fers
 knyghtez,
 ffewe mene agayne fele, mot fychen them bettyre;
 ffeghttez with alle þe frappe, foynes with speres,
- 2164 And faughte with the frekkeste þat to Fraunce langez.
 Bot sir Kayous þe kene castis in fewtyre,
 Chasez one a coursere, and to a kynge rydys;
 With a launce of Lettowe he thirlez his sydez,
- 2168 That the lyver and þe lunggez on þe launce lengez.
 The schafte scodyrde and schott in the schire byerne,
 And soughte thorowowte þe schelde, and in þe schalke
 rystez.
- Bot Kayous at the income was kepyd un-fayre
- 2172 With a cowarde knyghte of þe kythe ryche;
 At the turnynge that tyme the traytours hym hitte
 In thorowe the felettes, and in þe flawnke aftyre,
 That the boustous launce þe bewelles attamede,
- 2176 þat braste at þe brawlyng, and brake in þe myddys.
 Sir Kayous knewe wele, be þat kyde wounde,
 That he was dede of þe dynte, and done owte of lyfe.
 Than he raykes one arraye and one rawe rydez,
- 2180 One this ryalle his dede to revenge;
 "Kepe the, cowarde," and calles hym sone,
 Cleves hym wyth his clere brande clenliche in sondire!
 "Hadde thou wele delte thy dynt with thi handes,
- 2184 I hade forgeffene þe my dede, be Crist now of hewyne!"
 He weyndes to þe wyse kynge, and wynly hym gretes,
 "I am wathely woundide, waresche mone I never!
 Wirke nowe thi wirchiþe, as þe worlde askes,
- 2188 And brynge me to beryelle, byd I no more!
 Grete wele my ladye þe qwene, þe þe werlde happyne,

Sir Cayous and
 his men slay five
 hundred.

He kills a king,

but is sorely
 wounded by a
 coward knight
 from behind.

He feels that he
 has received a
 mortal wound,
 but strikes down
 the coward.

He makes his
 way to Arthur,
 and tells him that
 he is dying.

He bids him
 greet for him the

- And alle þe burliche birdes þat to hir boure lengez ;
 And my worthily weife, þat wrethide me never,
 2192 Bid hire fore hir wyrchipe wirke for my saulle !”
 The kynges confessour come, with Criste in his handes,
 ffor to comforth the knyghte, kende hym þe wordes ;
 The knyghte coueride on his knees with a kaunt herte,
 2196 And caughte his Creatoure þat comfurthes us alle !
 Thane remmes þe riche kyng fore rewthe at his herte,
 Rydes in-to rowte his dede to revenge ;
 Presede in-to þe plumpe, and with a prynce metes,
 2200 That was ayere of Egipt in thos este marches ;
 Cleves hym with Collbrande clenlyche in sondyre !
 He broches evene thorowe þe byerne, and þe sadille
 bristes,
 And at þe bake of þe blonke þe bewelles entamede !
 2204 Manly in his malycoly he metes anoper,
 The medille of þat myghtty, þat hym myche grevede ;
 He merkes thurghe the maylez the myddes in sondyre,
 That the myddys of þe mane on þe moute fallez,
 2208 þe toper halfe of þe haunche on þe horse levyde.
 Of þat hurte, alls I hope, heles he never !
 He schotte thorowe þe schiltouns with his scharpe wapens,
 Schalkez he schrede thurghe, and schrenkede maylez ;
 2212 Baneres he bare downne, bryttenede scheldes,
 Brothely with browne stele his brethe he þare wrekes :
 Wrothely he wryththis by wyghtnesse of strenghe,
 Woundes þese whydyrewyns, werrayed knyghttes,
 2216 Threppede thorowe þe thykkys thryttene sythis,
 Thrynges throly in the thrange, and chis evene aftyre !
 Thanesir Gawayne the gude, with wyrchipfull knyghttez,
 Wendez in the avawewarde be tha wodde hemmys ;
 2220 Was warre of syr Lucius, one launde there he hovys,
 With lordez and ligge mene, that to hymse-selfe lengede.
 Thane the emperour enkerly askes hym sonne,
 “ What wille thou, Gawayne, wyrke with thi wapyns ?
 2224 I watte be thi waveryng, thou willnez aftyre sorowe ;

Queen, the nobles
of the court, and
his wife.

Then comes the
King's confessor
with the holy
wafer.

Cayous receives
him with devo-
tion.
Then Arthur, full
of grief, rushes
into the fray to
avenge him.

He cleaves an
Egyptian prince
asunder.

Another he chops
in half.

He cuts his way
through the
battle.

Sir Gawaine at-
tacks the Em-
peror Lucius.

I sall be wrokyne on thi wrethe, for alle thi grete wordez?"

But Lucius with his long sword wounds Sir Lionel,

He laughte owtte a lange swerde, and luyschede one ffaste, And *sy*r Lyonelle in the launde lordely hym strykes,

2228 Hittes hym on *þe* hede, *þat* *þe* helme bristis ;

Hurttes his herne-pane an haunde-brede large !

Thus he layes one *þe* lumppe, and lordlye *þem*e served, Wondide worthily wirchipfull knygthtez !

and makes the blood flow from Sir Florent.

2232 ffighntez with Florent that beste es of swerde,

Tille *þe* fomande blode tille his fyste rynnes !

Thane *þe* Romayns relevyde, *þat* are ware rebuykkyde, And alle to-rattysoure menes with theire riste horsse ;

The Romans, excited by his bravery, get the better of Arthur's men.

2236 ffore they see *þaire* cheftayne be chauffede so sore,

They chasse and choppe dounoure chevalrous knyghttes ! Sir Bedwere was borne thurghe, and his breste thyrllede,

Sir Bedwere is slain.

With a burlyche braunde, brode at *þe* hiltis ;

2240 The ryalle raunke stele to his hertte rynnys,

And he rusches to *þe* erthe, rewthe es the more !

Then Arthur comes to the rescue.

Thane *þe* conquerour tuke kepe, and come with his strengthes

To reschewe *þe* ryche mene of *þe* rounde table,

2244 To owtttraye *þe* emperour, *þif* auntire it schewe,

Ewyne to *þe* egle, and Arthure askryes.

The emperour thane egerly at Arthure he strykez,

Awkwarde on *þe* umbrere, and egerly hym hittez !

The Emperor strikes Arthur on the visor, and wounds his face.

2248 The nakyde swerde at *þe* nese noyes hym sare,

The blode of bolde kynges over *þe* breste rynnys,

Beblede at *þe* brode schelde and *þe* bryghte mayles !

Oure bolde kynges bowes *þe* blonke be *þe* bryghte brydylle,

Arthur gives him a buffet that cuts through his head and breast.

2252 With his burlyche brande a buffette hym reches,

Thourghe *þe* brene and *þe* breste with his bryghte wapyne,

O-slante doun fro *þe* slote he slyttes at ones !

Sir Lucius dies, and the Romans fly.

Thus endys *þe* emperour of Arthure hondes,

2256 And all his austeryne oste *þare*-of ware affrayede !

Now they ferke to *þe* fyrthe, a fewe *þat* are levede,

ffor ferdnesse of oure folke, by *þe* fresche strandez !

- The floure of oure ferse mene one fferant stede
 2260 ffolowes frekly on þe frekes, thate ffrayed was never. Arthur's men pursue.
 Thane þe kyde conquerour cryes full lowde,—
 “Cosyne of Cornewaille, take kepe to þi-selfene,
 That no captayne be kepyde for none silver,
 2264 Or *syr Kayous* dede be cruelly vengede!” The King bids them give no quarter.
 “Nay,” sais *syr Cador*, “so me Criste helpe!
 Thare ne es kaysere ne kyng, þat undire Criste rygnes,
 þat I ne schalle kille colde dede be crafte of my hande!” Sir Cador declares that he will spare neither king nor kaiser.
 2268 Thare myghte mene see chiftaynes, on chalke whitte stede,
 Choppe doun in the chaas chevalrye noble;
 Romaines þe rycheste and ryalle kynges,
 Braste with ranke stele theire rybbys in sondyre! A fearful carnage follows.
 2272 Grayves fore-brustene thurghe burneste helmes,
 With brandez for-brittenede one brede in þe launde;
 They hewed doun haythene mene with hiltede swerde,
 Be hole hundreth on hye, by þe holte cynyes! Heathen men are slain by hundreds.
 2276 Thare myghte no silver theym save, ne socoure theire
 lyves,
 Sowdane ne Sarazene,—ne senatour of Rome!
 Thane relevis þe renkes of the rounde table
 Be þe riche revare, that rynnys so faire;
 2280 Lugegez thaym lufye by þa lyghte strandez,
 Alle on lawe in þe lawnde, that lordlyche byernes:
 Thay kaire to þe karyage, and tuke whate them likes,
 Kamelles and sekadrisses, and cofirs full riche,
 2284 Hekes and hakkenays, and horses of armes,
 Howsynges and herbergage of heythene kynges;
 They drewe owt of dromondaries dyverse lordes,
 Moyllez mylke whitte, and *merveillous* bestez,
 2288 Elfaydes, and Arrabys, and olyfauntez noble,
 þer are of þe Oryent, with honourable kynges.
Bot *syr Arthure* onone ayeres þer-aftre
 Ewys to the Emperour, with honourable kyngis;
 2292 Laughte hym up full lovelyly with lordliche knyghttez,
 And ledde hym to þe layere, thare the kyng lygges.

Arthur's men
plunder the rich
camp of the Ro-
mans.

Horses, camels,
dromedaries,
milk-white
mules, elephants,
and many mar-
vellous beasts are
captured.

The bodies of the
Emperor and
chief men of
Rome are em-
balmed and
wrapped in lead,

enclosed in
coffins, and sent
to Rome with
their banners
displayed over
them.

Two Senators
come barefoot
and kneel before
the conqueror.

The King grants
them their lives
on condition of
their carrying a
message for him
to Rome.

- Thane harawdez heghely, at heste of the lordes,
Hunttes upe the haythemene, that on heghte lygges,
2296 The Sowdane of Surry, and certayne kynges,
Sexty of þe cheefe senatours of Rome.
Thane they bussches and bawmede þaire honourliche
kynges,
Sewed them in sendelle sexti faulde aftire,
2300 Lappede them in lede, lesse that they schulde
Chawnge or chawffe, ȝif þay myghte escheffe;
Closed in kystys clene un-to Rome,
With theire baners abowne, theire bagis there-undyre,
2304 In whate countre þay kaire that knyghttes myghte knawe
Iche kyng be his colours, in kyth whare lengede.
Onone on the secounde daye, sone by þe morne,
Twa senatours ther come, and certayne knyghttez,
2308 Hodles fro þe hethe, over þe holte eynes,
Barefote over þe bente, with brondes so ryche,
Bowes to þe bolde kyng, and biddis hym þe hiltes,
Whethire he wille hang theym or hedde, or halde theyme
on lyfe :
2312 Knelyde be-fore þe conquerour in kyrtilles allone;
With carefull contenance þay karpide þese wordes,—
“Twa senatours we are, thi subgettez of Rome,
That has savede oure lyfe by þeise salte strandys;
2316 Hyd us in þe heghe wode, thurghe þe helpynge of Criste!
Besekes the of socoure, as soveraygne and lorde!
Grante us lyffe and lyme with liberalle herte,
ffor his luffe that the lente this lordchipe in erthe!”
2320 “I graunte,” *quod* gude kyng, “thurghe grace of my-
selfene,
I giffe ȝowe lyffe and lyme, and leve for to passe,
So ȝe doo my message menskefully at Rome,
That ilke charge þat I ȝow ȝiffe here be-fore my cheefe
knyghttez.”
2324 “ȝis,” sais the senatours, “that salle we ensure,
Sekerly be oure trowhes thi sayenges to fullfille;

- We salle lett for no lede þat lyffes in erthe,
 ffore pape ne for potestate, ne prynce so noble,
 2328 That ne salle lelely in lande thi letteres pronounce,
 ffor duke ne fore dussepere, to dye in þe payne!"
- T**hane the banerettez of Bretayne broghte þeme to tentes;
 There barbouris ware bownne, with basyns one lofte,
 2332 With warme watire i-wys they wette theme fulle sone;
 They schoven this schalkes scharpely ther-aftyre,
 To rekkene theis Romaynes recreaunt and ȝoldene;
 ffor-thy schove they theme to schewe, for skomfitte of
 Rome.
- 2336 They coupylde þe kystys on kamelles be-lyve,
 On asses and arrabyes, theis honourable kynges;
 The emperoure for honoure, alle by hym one,
 Evene appone ane olyfaunte, hys egle owtt overe;
 2340 Be-kende theme the captyfis the kyng dide hym-selfene,
 And alle byfore his kene mene karpede thees wordes,—
 “**H**ere are the kystis,” *quod* the kyng, “kaire over
 þe mownttez;
 Mette fulle monee þat ȝe have mekyll ȝernede,
 2344 The taxe and þe trebutte of tene schore wyntteris,
 That was tenefully tynte in tyme of oure elders:
 Saye to the senatoure, þe ceté þat ȝemes,
 That I sende hyme þe somme, assaye how hyme likes!”
- 2348 Bott byde theme nevere be so bolde, whylles my blode
 regnes,
 Efte for to brawlee þeme for my brode landez,
 Ne to aske trybut ne taxe be nakyne tytly,
 Bot syche tresoure as this, whilles my tyme lastez.”
- 2352 Nowe they raike to Rome the redyeste wayes,
 Knylles in the capatoylle, and comowns assembles,
 Soverayngez and senatours, the ceté þat ȝemes;
 Be-kende theme the caryage, kystis and oþer,
 2356 Alls þe conquerour comaunde with cruelle wordes.
 “We hafe trystily trayvellede þis tributte to feche,
 The taxe and þe trewage of fowre score wynteris,
- The British lords
bring barbers and
basons and baths
for them, in order
to prove their
submission.
- They fastened the
coffins two and
two on camels.
- The Emperour's
body, for honour,
was by itself on
an elephant.
- Arthur charges
them to say
that they have
brought the ar-
rears of tribute
due from him to
Rome.
- This is the only
tribute they will
ever get from
him.
- They hasten to
Rome and sum-
mon the people
to the Capitol.
- Perform Arthur's
message as he
directed.

They have brought the taxes from England and Ireland, and all the west.

Of Iglande, of Irelande and alle þir owtt illes,
 2360 That Arthure in the occedente occupyes att ones :
 He byddis þow nevere be so bolde, whills his blode regnes
 To brawle þowe fore Bretayne ne his brode landes,
 Ne aske hym trebute ne taxe be nonkyns title,

They declare that they have suffered defeat and great loss,

2364 Bot syche tresoure as this, whills his tyme lastis.
 We haffe foughttene in ffrance, and us es foule happenede,
 And alle oure myche faire folke faye are by-levede !
 Eschappide there ne chevallrye, ne cheftaynes noþer,

and bid the Romans beware.

2368 Bott choppede downne in the chassee, syche chawnce es
 be-fallene !

We rede þc store þowe of stone, and stuffene þour walles :
 þow wakkens wandrethe and werre ; be-ware, þif þow
 lykes !"

This great battle between Arthur and the Romans was fought in the calends of May.

In the kalendez of Maye this caas es be-fallene :
 2372 I The roy ryalle renownde, with his rownde table,
 One the coste of Constantyne by þe clere strandez,
 Has þe Romaines ryche rebuykede for ever !
 Whene he hade foughttene in Fraunce, and the felde
 wonnene,

It was a blow from which the Romans could not recover.

2376 And fersely his foomene felde owtte of lyfe,
 He bydes for þe beryenge of his bolde knyghtez,
 That in batelle with brandez ware broughte owte of lyfe.

After the defeat Arthur buries his knights.

Sir Bedwere at Bayonne ;
 Sir Cayous at Camelot ;

He beryes at Bayone syr Bedwere þe ryche ;
 2380 The cors of Kayone þe kene at Came es belevefede,
 Koveride with a crystalle clenly alle over ;

In Burgundy, Berade, and Baldwin, and Bedwar ;
 Sir Cador at Camelot.

In the August after Arthur enters into Germany,

His fadyre conqueride þat kyth knyghtly with hondes :
 Seyne in Burgoyne he bade to bery mo knyghttez,
 2384 Sir Berade and Bawdwyne, sir Bedwar þe ryche,
 And syr Cador at Came, as his kynde askes.
 Thane syr Arthure onone, in þe Auguste þer-aftyre,
 Enteres to Almayne wyth osten arrayed ;

- 2388 Lengez at Lusscheburghe, to lechen^s hys knyghttez,
 With his lele ligge-mene, as lorde in his awene:
 And one *Chrispofre* daye a concelle he haldez,
 Withe kynges and kayzers, clerkkes and oper,
- 2392 Comandez them kenely to caste alle peire wittys,
 How he may *conquere* by crafe the kythe þat he claymes.
 Bot the *conquerour* kene, curtais and noble,
 Karpes in the concelle theys knyghtly wordez,—
- 2396 “Here es a knyghte in theis klevys, enclesside with hilles,
 That I have cowaite to knawe, be-cause of his wordez,
 That es Lorayne þe lele, I kepe noghte to layne;
 The lordchiþe es lovely, as ledes me telles :
- 2400 I wille that Ducherye devyse, and dele as me lykes,
 And seyne dresse wyth þe duke, if destyny suffre :
 The renke rebell^s has bene un-to my rownde table,
 Redy aye with Romaines, and ryotte my landes !
- 2404 We salle rekkene fulle rathe, if resone so happene,
 Who has ryghte to þat rente, by ryche Gode of hevene !
 Thane wille I by Lumbardy lykande to schawe,
 Sett lawe in þe lande, þat laste salle ever.
- 2408 The tyrauntez of Terkayne tempeste a littylle,
 Talke with þe temperalle, whilles my tyme lastez ;
 I gyffe my protteccion to alle þe pope landez,
 My ryche penselle of pes my pople to schewe :
- 2412 It es a foly to offende oure fadyr undire Gode,
 Owþer Peter or Paule, þa postles of Rome.
 ʒiff we spare the *spirituelle*, we spede bot the bettire ;
 Whilles we have for to speke, spille salle it never !”¹
- 2416 **N**ow they spede at þe spurres, with-owt tynne speche
 more,
 To þe Marche of Meyes, theis manliche knyghtez,
 That es Lorrayne alofede, as London^s es here ;
 Pety of þat seynowre, that soveraynge es holdens.
- 2420 The kyng ferkes furthe on a faire stede,

and encamps at
Luxemburg.

He holds a coun-
cil on Christmas-
day to devise how
he may conquer
all the territory
that he claims.

He makes a
speech in the
council, saying
that he much de-
sires the posses-
sions of the Duke
of Lorraine,

who has been
long a rank rebel
to his Round
Table.

He will soon
show him who
is the rightful
owner of those
lands !

Afterwards he
will go to Lom-
bardy and then
visit the tyrants
of Turkey,

but he will give
protection to all
the lands of the
Pope, for it is
folly to offend
our Father under
God.

If we spare the
goods of the
spirituality we
shall speed the
better.

Arthur straight-
way leads his
knights to lay
siege to Metz.

¹ This passage may be taken as tolerably conclusive evidence that the poem was com-
posed by an ecclesiastic.

They seek a place
to fix the en-
gines.

The citizens
shoot at them
with arrows and
bolts.

The king, with-
out his shield,
remains close to
the walls within
range of the
arrows.

Sir Ferrere re-
monstrates with
him for exposing
himself to such
danger.

Arthur scorns
him, and tells
him

that he would be
afraid of a fly
that lighted on
him.

As for him, he
fears not such
poor creatures as
these.

Never knave will
be allowed to kill
a crowned king.

Then come the
gallant troops of
Arthur.

First the light
furrays on nim-
ble steeds ;

then the renown-
ed champions of
the Round Table ;

- With ferreraunde ferawnte, and oþer foure knyghtez ;
Abowte the cete þa sevene, thay soughte at þe nextte,
To seke them a sekyre place to sett withe engeynes ;
- 2424 Thane they beneyde in burghe bowes of vyse,
Bekyrs at þe bolde kyng with boustouse lates,
All-blawsters at Arthure egerly schottes,
ffor to hurte hym or his horse with þat hard wapens :
- 2428 The kyng schonte for no schotte, ne no schelde askys,
Bot schewes hym scharpely in his schene wedys ;
Lenges alle at laysere, and lokes one the wallys,
Whare þey ware laweste the ledes to assaille.
- 2432 " Sir," said syr fferere, " a ffoly thowe wirkkes,
Thus nakede in thy noblaye to neghe to þe walles,
Sengely in thy surcotte, this ceté to reche,
And schewe þe with-in, there to schende us alle.
- 2436 Hye us hastylle heyne, or we mon full happene,
ffor hitt they the or thy horse, it harmes for ever !" *" Ife thowe be ferde," quod the kyng, " I rede thow*
ryde uttere,
Lesse þat þey rywe the with their rownd wapyn !
- 2440 Thow arte bot a fawntkyne, ne ferly me thynkkys !
þou wille be flayed for a flye þat one thy flesche lyghttes !
I am nothyng agaste, so me Gode helpe !
þof siche gadlynges be grevede, it greves me bot lyttill !
- 2444 Thay wyns no wirchiþe of me, bot wastys their takle !
They salls wante or I weende, I wagens myne hevede !
Salle never harlotte have happe, thorowe helpe of my
Lorde,
To kyll a crownde kyng with krysom enoyntede !" *"*
- 2448 Thane come þe herbarjours, harageous knyghtez,
The hale batelles one hye harrawnte ther-aftyre ;
And oure forreours ferse, appons fele halves,
Come flyeande be-fore one ferawnt stedes ;
- 2452 fferkande in arraye their ryalls knyghttez,
The renkez renownde of þe rownnd table :
Alle þe frekke men of Fraunce folowede thare aftyre,

- faire fittyde *one* frownte, and *one* the felde hovys.
- 2456 Thane the schalkes scharpelye scheftys theire horsez,
To schewene them semly in theire scheene wedes;
Buskes in batayle with baners displayede,
With brode scheldes enbrassede, and burlyche helmys,
- 2460 With pennons and penselles of ylke prynce armes,
Appayrellde with perrye and *pretious* stones:
The lawnces with loraynes, and lemande scheldes,
Lyghtenande as *þe* levenyngs, and lemand al *over*.
- 2464 **T**thane the price mene prekes, and *proves* þeire horsez,
Satilles to *þe* ceté, appone sere halves;
Enserches the subbarbes sadly thare-aftyre,
Discoveris of schotte-mene, and skyrmys a lyttile;
- 2468 Skayres þaire skottefers, and theire skowtte waches,
Brittenes theire barrers with theire bryghte wapyns;
Bett downe a barbycane, and *þe* brygge wynnys,
Ne hade the garnysone bene gude at *þe* grete gates,
- 2472 Thay hade wonne that wone be theire awene strenghe!
Thane with-drawes oure mene, and drisses theme bettyre,
ffor dred of *þe* drawe-brigge dasschede in sondre;
Hyes to *þe* harbergage, thare the kyngs hovys
- 2476 With his battelle *one* heghe, horsyde on stedys;
Thane was *þe* prynce *purvayede*, and þeire places nomeno,
Pyghte pavyllions of palle, and plattes in seegge.
Thane lenge they lordly, as þeme leefte thoghte,
- 2480 Waches in ylke warde, as to *þe* werre falles,
Settes up sodaynly certayne engynes;
One Sonondaye be *þe* soone has a fleche zoldene.
The kyngs calles *one* Florente, þat flour was of
- knyghttez,—
- 2484 “TheFraunche-mene enfeblesches, ne farly me thynkkys!
They are un-fondyde folke in þa faire marches,
ffor theme wantes *þe* flesche and fude that theme lykes.
Here are fforestез faire appone fele halves,
- 2488 And thedyre feemenс are flede with freliche bestes!
Thow salls foonde to *þe* felle, and forraye the mountes;

and all the brave men of France following them. They cause their steeds to curvet to show their bright caparisons.

Their banners are displayed; broad shields of brass and mighty helmets; pennons emblazoned with arms. The lances glance like lightning.

The chief men exhibit the speed of their horses.

They encompass the city on divers sides,

skirmish with the garrison, and break down their defences.

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But the garrison at the great gates checks them.

Arthur's men withdraw to where the king was waiting.

They pitch their tents, and prepare for a regular siege.

Arthur calls for Sir Florent, and sends him on an expedition into the neighbouring country to collect supplies.

Sir fforawnt and *syr* Florydas salls folowe thi brydylls;
 Us moste with some fresche mette refresche our pople,
 2492 That are feedde in þe fyrthe with þe froyte of þe erthe.
 Sir Gawaine him-
 self, the wor-
 shipful warden,
 shall accompany
 them,

and many other
 knights of name.

2496 With alle wyseste men of þe Weste marches:
 Sir Clegis, *syr* Clarybalde, *syr* Clarymownde þe noble,
 The capytayne oo wardyfe clenlyche arrayede.
 Goo now, warne alle þe wache, Gawayne and oþer,
 2500 And weendes furthe on þour waye withowttyns moo
 wordes."

These fresh men
 of arms start in
 their journey
 through woods
 and over hills.

N
 ow ferkes to þe fyrthe thees fresche men of armes,
 To þe felle so fewe, theis fresclyche byernes,
 Thorowe hopes and hymlande hillys and oþer,

2504 Holtis and hare woddess with healyne schawes,
 Thorowe marasse and mosse and montes so heghe;
 And in the myste mornynge one a mede falles,
 Mawens and un-made, maynoyrede bott lyttlylle,

They fall upon a
 field of grass
 newly mown,

where they bait
 their horses,

while the birds
 sweetly sing.

2508 In swathes sweppens downe fulls of swete floures:
 Thare unbrydilles theis bolde, and baytes þeire horses,
 To þe grygynge of þe daye, that byrdes gane synge;
 Whylls the surs of þe sonne, þat sonde es of Cryste,

2512 That solaces alle synfulls, þat syghte has in erthe.
 Thane weendes owtt the wardayne, *syr* Gawayne hym-
 selfene,

Sir Gawaine goes
 forth by himself
 to seek adven-
 tures.

Alles he þat weysse was and wyghte, wondyrs to seke;
 Thane was he warre of a wye wondyre wele armyde,

He sees a knight
 well armed,

2516 Baytand ons a wattire banke by þe wodde eynis,
 Buskede in brenyes bryghte to be-halde,
 Enbrassede a brode schelde on a blonke ryche,
 With birenne ony borne, bot a boye one

and a page carry-
 ing his spear.

2520 Hoves by hym on a blonke, and his spere holdes;
 He bare sessenande in golde thre grayhondes of sable,
 With chapes a cheynes of chalke whytte sylver,
 A charbocke in þe cheefe, chawngawnde of hewes,

On his shield his
 coat of arms was
 displayed.

2524 And a cheefe anterous, chalange who lykes.

Sir Gawayne glystes on the gome with a glade wille!

Sir Gawaine beholds him with great joy, and goes across the stream towards him.

A grete spere fro his grome he grypes in hondes,
Gyrdes ewene ~~overe~~ the streme on a stede ryche

2528 To þat steryne in stour, one strenghe þare he hovys!

Egerly one Inglisce Arthure he askryes,

He shouts his cry, "Arthur of England."

The toþer iroualye ansuers hyme sone

The other shouts "Lorraine."

On a launde of Lorrayne with a lowde stevene,

2532 That ledes myghte lystens þe lenghe of a myle!

"Whedyr prykkes thow, pilour, þat profers so large?

Then does the strange knight declare that Gawaine shall be his prisoner.

Here pykes thowe no praye, profire whens þe lykes!

Bot thow in þis perelle put of the bettire,

2536 Thow salls be my presonere, for alle thy prowde lates!"

"Sir," sais *syr* Gawayne, "so me Gode helpe!

Sir Gawaine treats his great words with contempt.

Siche glaverande gomes greves me bot lyttill!

Bot if thowe graythe thy gere, the wille grefe happens,

2540 Or thowe goo of þis greve, for alle thy grete wordes!"

Thane þeire launces they lachene, thes lordlyche byernez,

Then they lay their spears in rest, and meet.

Laggene with longe speres one lyarde stedes;

Cowpens at awntere be brastes of armes,

2544 Tille bothe þe crowells speres broustene att ones!

Both the spears strike fair, and wound the knights.

Thorowe scheldys þey schotte, and scherde thorowe males,

Bothe schere thorowe schoulders a schaftmonde large!

Thus worthylve þes wyes wondede ere bothene;

2548 Or they wreke þeme of wrethe a-waye wille þey never!

Then they rein in their horses and return to the fight with swords.

Than they raughte in the reyne and a-gayne rydes,

Redely theis rathe mene rusches owtte swordez,

Hittes one hellmes fulls hertelyche dynttys,

2552 Hewes appone hawberkes with fulls harde wapyns!

Fearful blows are exchanged.

fulls stowtly þey stryke thire steryne knyghttes,

Stokes at þe stomake with stelyne poynttes,

fleghttene and floresche withe flawmande swerdez,

2556 Tille þe flawes of fyre flawmes one theire helmes.

Sir Gawaine waxes wroth, and strikes grimly with his sword Galuth.

Thane *syr* Gawayne was grevede, and grythgide fulls sore;

With Galuthe his gude swerde grymlye he strykes!

Clefe þe knyghttes schelde clenliche in sondre!

He cleaves the knight's shield asunder, and lays open his side.

The knight strikes fiercely at Sir Gawaine.

He cuts through his armour and draws blood,

which flows over all his dress.

Then the knight jeers at him, and says the blood shall never be staunched.

Sir Gawaine despises his words,

but would know what can stop the bleeding.

The knight will tell him if Gawaine will allow him to have shrift and prepare himself for his end.

Gawaine readily grants this.

- 2560 Who lukes to þe lefte syde, whene his horse launches,
With þe lyghte of þe sonne men myghte see his lyvere!
Thane granes þe gome fore greefe of his wondys,
And gyrdis at *syr* Gawayne, as he by glentis;
- 2564 And awkewarde egerly sore he hym smyttes;
An alet enamelde he oches in sondire,
Bristes þe rerebrace with the bronde ryche,
Kerves of at þe couter with þe clene egge,
- 2568 Anetis þe avawmbrace vrayllede with silver!
Thorowe a dowble vesture of velvett ryche,
With þe venymous swerde a vayne has he towchede!
That voydes so violently þat alle his witte changede!
- 2572 The vesere, the aventaille, his vesturis ryche,
With the valyant blode was verrede alle over!
Thane this tyrante tite turnes þe brydille,
Talkes un-tendirly, and sais, "þow arte towchede!"
- 2576 Us bus have a blode bande, or thi ble change,
ffor alle þe barbours of Bretayne salle noghte thy blode
stawnche!
ffor he þat es blemeste with þis brade brande, blyne
schalle he never."
- "þa," *quod syr* Gawayne, "thow greves me bot lyttill!
2580 Thowe wenys to glopyne me with thy gret wordez!
Thow trowes with thy talkyngs þat my harte talmes!
Thow betydes torfere or thowe hyene turne,
Bot thow telle me tytte, and tarye no lengere,
- 2584 What may staunche this blode þat thus faste rynnes."
"þife I say þe sothely, and sekire þe my trowthe,
No surggone in Salarne salle save þe bettyre;
With-thy þat thowe suffre me, for sake of thy Cryste,
- 2588 To schewe schortly my schrifte, and schape for myne
ende."
- "þis," *quod syr* Gawayne, "so me God helpe!
I gyfe þe grace and graunt, thofe þou hafe grefe sorvede!"
- 2592 With-thy thowe say me sothe what thowe here sekis,
Thus sengilly and sulayne alle þi-selfe one;

And whate laye thow leues one, layne noghte þe sothe,
And whate legyaunce, and whare þow arte lorde."

- 2596 "My name es *syr* Priamus; a prince es my fadyre,
Praysede in his *pertyes* with provede kynges;
In Rome thare he regnes he es riche haldene;
He has bene rebelle to Rome, and redene theire landes,

The stranger knight tells him that his name is Sir Priamus, son of a prince,

- 2600 Werreyand weisely wyntters and þeres,
Be witt and be wyssdome, and be wyghte strenghe,
And be wyrchipfuller werre his awene has he wonne.
He es of Alexandire blode, *overlynge* of kynges,

who rebelled against Rome, and gained a kingdom.

- 2604 The uncle of his ayele, *syr* Ector of Troye;
And here es the kynredene that I of come,
And Judas and Josue, þise gentille knyghtes:
I ame apparaunt his ayere, and eldeste of *oþer*;

He is of the blood of Alexander and Hector of Troy;

- 2608 Of Alexandere and Aufrike, and alle þa owte landes,
I am in possessione, and plenerly sessede.
In alle þe price cetees that to þe porte langes,
I salle hafe trewly the tresour and the londes,

related also to Judas and Joshua;

- 2612 And bothe trebute and taxe whilles my tyme lastes;
I was so hawtayne of herte, whilles I at home lengede,
I helde nane my hippe heghte undire hevene rychen;
ffor-thy was I sente hedire with seven score knyghttez,

heir of Africa.

- 2616 To asaye of this werre, be sente of my fadire;
And I am for *Cyrus* wityre schamely supprisede,
And be awtire of armes owtrayed for evere!
Now hafe I taulde the þe kyne that I ofe come,

When at home he was so proud and overbearing,

- 2620 Wille thow for knyghthede kene me thy name?"
"Be Criste," *quod* *syr* Gawayne, "knyghte wys I never!
With þe kydder conquerour a knave of his chambyre:
Has wroghte in his wardrope wyntters and þeres,

that he was sent by his father to this war with a band of knights.

- 2624 One his longe armour that hym beste lykid;
I poyne alle his pavelouns þat to hym-selfe pendes,
Dyghttes his dowbletkez for dukes and erles,
Aketouns avenaunt for Arthure hym selfene,

He desires to know Sir Gawaine's name.

Sir Gawaine answers deceitfully that he is only a knave of Arthur's chamber,

- 2628 That he usede in werre alle this aughte wyntter!
He made me þomane at þole, and gafe me gret gyftes,

who had given him a horse and harness as a reward for service.

"If his knaves be such, what can his knights be?" exclaims Sir Priamus. Alexander and Hector will be nothing to him.

Then Sir Gawaine tells him the truth.

He is Sir Gawaine, cousin to the Conqueror, the richest knight of all the Round Table.

Then Sir Priamus says this is better to him than any earthly possessions.

In recompense, he warns Gawaine that the Duke of Lorraine is lying in the wood near.

A mighty host well armed.

And c. pound and a horse, and harnayse fulls ryche;
Gife I happe to my hele that hende for to serve,

2632 I be holpene in haste, I hette the for-sothe!"

"Giffe his knaves be syche, his knyghtez are noble!
There es no kyng undire Criste may kempe with hym one!
He wille be Alexander ayre, þat alle þe erthe lowttede,
2636 Abillere þane ever was syr Ector of Troye."

"Now fore the krisome þat þou kaghte that day þou
was crystenede,

Whethire thoue be knyghte or knaffe, knowe now þe
sothe :

My name es syr Gawayne, I graunt þe forsothe,
2640 Cosyne to the conquerour, he knowes it hyme selfene;
Kydd in his kalander a knyghte of his chambyre,
And rollede the richeste of alle þe rounde table!
I ame þe dussepere and duke he dubbede with his hondes,

2644 Deynttely on a daye be-fore his dere knyghtes;
Gruche noghte, gude syr, þofe me this grace happene;
It es þe gifte of Gode, the gree es hys awene!"

"Petire!" sais Priamus, "now payes me bettire

2648 Thane I of Provynce warre prynce, and of Paresche ryche!
ffore me ware lever prevely be prykkyd to þe harte,
Than ever any prikkere had siche a pryse wonnyne!

Bot here es herberde at handes, in þone huge holtes,
2652 Halle bataile one heyghe, take hede þif the lyke!
The duke of Lorraine the derfe, with his dere knyghtes,
The doughtyest of Dolfmede, and Duchemens many,
The lordes of Lombardiye that leders are haldene,

2656 The garnysons of Godarde gaylyche arrayede,
The wyese of þe Westvale, wirchipfull biernez,
Of Sessoyns and Surylande Sarazenes enewe;
They are nowmerde fulls neghe, and namede in rollez

2660 Sixty thowsande and tens for-sothe of sekyre mens of
armez ;

Bot þif thou hye fro þis hethe, it harmes us bothe,
And bot my hurtes be sons holpene, hole be I never !

- Tak heede to þis hausemene, þat he no hornes blawe,
 2664 Are thowe heyly in haste beese hewene al to peces;
 ffor they are my retenuz to ryde whare I wyll,
 Es none redyare renkes regnande in erthe;
 Be thow raghte with þat rowtt, thow rydes no forþer,
 2668 Ne thow bees never rawnsone for reches in erthe!"
- Sir Gawayne wente or þe wathe come, whare hym beste
 lykede,
 With this wortheliche wye, that wondyd was sore;
 Merkes to þe mountayne there oure mene lenges,
 2672 Baytaynde theire blonkes þer on þe brode mede;
 Lordes lenande lowe one lemande scheldes,
 With lowde laghttirs one lofte for lykyng of byrdez,
 Of larkez, of lynkwhyttez, þat lufflyche songene,
 2676 And some was aleghte one slepe with slaughte of þe pople,
 That sange in þe sesone in the schenne schawes,
 So lawe in þe lawndez so lykande notes.
 Thane syr Whycher whas warre þaire wardayne was
 wondyde,
 2680 And went to hym wepand, and wryngande his handes;
 Sir Wychere, syr Walchere, theis wise mene of armes,
 Had wondyre of syr Gawayne, and wente hyme agayns:
 Mett hym in the mydwaye, and mervaille them toghte
 2684 How he maisterede þat mane, so myghtty of strengthes!
 Be alle þe welthe of þe werlde, so woo was þeme never!
 "ffor alle our wirchippe i-wysse awaye es in erthe!"
 "Greve þow noghte," quod Gawayne, "for Godis luffe
 of hevene;
 2688 ffere this es bot gosesemere, and gyffene one erles;
 Poffe my schouldire be schrede, and my schelde thyrllede,
 And the wielde of myne arme werkkes a littille,
 This prissonere syr Priamus, that has perilous wondes,
 2692 Sais þat he has salvez salle softene us bothene."
 Thane stirttes to his sterape sterynfull knyghttez,
 And he lordely lyghttes and laghte of his brydille,
 And lete his burlyche blonke baite on þe flores;

He bids him beware lest they should discover and destroy him.

Sir Gawayne goes with the wounded knight to Arthur's men.

They are reposing themselves in different ways,

listening to the songs of the birds.

Sir Whycher perceives that Sir Gawayne is wounded,

and wonders how he could have conquered this mighty knight.

Sir Gawayne makes light of his wounds.

His prisoner, Sir Priamus, has salves that will heal them.

They assist him to dismount.

- 2696 Braydes of his bacenette and his ryche wedis,
 He bends from exhaustion and loss of blood.
 Bownnes to his brode schelde and bowes to þe erthe,
 In alle the bodye of that bolde es no blode leved!
 Than preses to syr Priamous precious knyghtes,
- 2700 Avyssely of his horse hentis hym in armes;
 His helme and his hawberke thay taken of aftyre,
 Sir Priamus is lifted from his horse.
 And hastily for his hurtte alle his herte chawngyd;
 Thay laide hyme downe in the lawnde, and laghte of
 his wedes,
- 2704 And he levede hym one lange, or how hym beste lykede;
 They find at his girdle a gold box filled with the flower of Paradise.
 A ffoyle of fyne golde they fand at his gyrdille,
 þat es full of þe flour of þe fourre welle,
 þat flowes owte of Paradice whene þe flode ryses,
- 2708 That myche froyt of fallez, þat feede schalle us alle;
 Be it frette on his flesche, þare synnes are entamede,
 The freke schalle be fische halle with-in fowre howres.
 They uncover þat cors with full clene hondes;
- 2712 With clere watire a knyghte clensis theire wondes,
 With this the knights are healed.
 Keled theyme kyndly, and comforthed þer hertes.
 And whene þe carffes ware elene, þay clede them aþayne;
 Barelle ferrers they brochede, and broghte them the wyne,
- 2716 Bothe brede and brawne, and bredis full ryche;
 Then wine and provisions are brought to them.
 Whene þay hade etens anone they armede after.
 Thane tha awntrende men as armes askryes,
 With a claryoune clere, thire knyghtez to-gedyre,
- 2720 Callys to concelle, and of this case tellys:—
 The scouts bring news of the army encamped in the wood.
 “þondyr es a companye of clene men of armes,
 The keneste in kontek þat undir Criste lenges;
 In þone okens wode an oste are arrayede,
- 2724 Undir takande men of þiese owte londes;
 As sais us syr Priamous, so helpe seynt Peter!”
 Sir Gawaine is for attacking them,
 “Go, men, quod Gawayne, “and grape in þoure hertez,
 Who salls graythe to þone greve to þone gret lordes;
 2728 þif we gettlesse goo home, the kyng will be grevede,
 but refers to Sir Florent, the leader of the party.
 And say we are gadlynges, agaste for a lyttille:
 We are with syr Florente, as to-daye falles,

That es floure of ffraunce, for he fleede never ;

- 2732 He was chosene and chargegide in chambire of þe kynges,
Chiftayne of þis journee with chevalrye noble ;
Whethire he fyghte or he flee, we salle folowe aftyre,
ffore alle þe fere of þone folke forsake salle I never !”

- 2736 “ffadyre,” sais *syr* Florent, “fulle faire ȝe it telle !
Bot I ame bot a fawntkyne, unfraystede in armes ;
ȝif any foly be-falle, þe fawte salle be owrs,
And freindly o Fraunce be flemede for ever !

Sir Florent expresses his deference to Sir Gawaine, the warden of the knights of the Round Table,

- 2740 Woundes noghte ȝour wirchipe, my witte es bot symple ;
ȝe are owre wardayne i-wysse, wyrke as ȝowe lykes ;
ȝe are at the ferreste noghte passande fyve hundrethe,
And þat es fully to fewe to feghte with theme alle,

and thinks their numbers are too few to fight.

- 2744 ffore harlottez and hausemene salle helpe bott littille ;
They wille hye theyme hyene for alle þeire gret wordes !
I rede ȝe wyrke aftyre witte, as wyesse men of armes,
And warpes wylily a-waye, as wirchipfull knyghtes.”

He is for a careful retreat.

- 2748 “I grawnte,” *quod* *syr* Gawayne, “so me Gode helpe !
Bot here are galyarde gomes þat of þe gre servis,
The kreuelleste knyghttes of þe kynges chambyre,
That kane carpe with the coppe knyghtly wordes ;

Sir Gawaine speaks with a sneer of those who only fight with words.

- 2752 We salle prove to daye who salle the prys wyne.”

Nowe ferriours fers un-to þe fyrthe rydez,
And foungez a faire felde, and on fotte lyghttez ;
Prekes aftyre þe pray, as pryce mene of armes.

Arthur's men advance to the wood.

- 2756 fflorent and Floridas, with fyve score knyghttez,
ffolowede in þe foreste, and on þe way fowndys,
fflyngande a faste trott, and on þe folke dryffes.
Than felewes fast to our folke wele a fyve hundreth

A band of 500 of the enemy meet them, headed by Sir Feraunt.

- 2760 Of freke mene to þe fyrthe, appone fresche horses ;
One *syr* Feraunt be-fore, apon a fayre stede,
(Was fosterde in Famacoste, the fende was his fadyre)
He flenges to *syr* Florent, and prystly he kryes,—

- 2764 “Why flees thow, falls knyghte ? þe fende hafe þi saule !”
Thane *syr* fflorent was fayne, and in fewter castys ;
One fawnelle of ffryselande to fferaunt he rydys,

He calls scornfully on Sir Florent,

- And raghte in þe reyne on þe stede ryche,
 2768 And rydes to-warde the rowte, restes he no lengere!
 ffulle butt in þe frounte he flysches hymse evene,
 And alle dysfegoures his face with his felle wapene!
 Thurghe his bryghte bacenette his brayne has he towchede,
 2772 And brustene his neke-bone, þat all his breste stoppede!
 Thane his cosyne askryede, and cryede fulle lowde,
 "Thowe has killede colde dede þe kyng of alle knyghttes!
 He has bene fraistede on felde in fyftene rewmes;
 2776 He fonde never no freke myghte foghte with hym one!
 Thow schalle dye for his dede with my derfe wapene,
 And all þe doughtty for dule þat in þone dale hoves!"
 "ffy," sais *syr* fforidas, "thow fflieryande wryche!
 2780 Thow wenes for to flay us, ffloke-mowthede schrewe!"
 Bot fforidas with a swerde, as he by glentys,
 Alle þe flesche of þe flanke he flappes in sondyre,
 That alle the filthe of þe freke and fele of þe guttes
 2784 ffoloes his fole fotte, whene he furthe rydes!
 Than rydes a renke to reschewe þat byerne,
 That was Raynalde of þe rodes, and rebelle to Criste,
 Pervertede with Paynymys þat Cristene persewes;
 2788 Presses in prowly, as þe praye wendes,
 ffore he hade in Prewaslande myche pryce wonnens;
 ffor-thi in presence thare he profers so large!
 Bot thane a renke *syr* Richere of þe rounde table,
 2792 One a ryalle stede rydes hym aaynes;
 Throwe a rownnde rede schelde he ruschede hym sone,
 That the rosselde spere to his herte rynnes!
 The renye relys abowte and rusches to þe erthe,
 2796 Roris fulle ruydlye, bot rade he no more!
 Now alle þat es fere and unfaye of þes fyve hundreth
 ffallen on *syr* fflorent, a ffyve score knyghttes;
 Be-twyx a plasche and a flode, appone a fiate lawnde,
 2800 Oure folke fongens theire felde, and fawghte themse
 agaynes,
 Than was lowde appone lofte Lorrayne askryede,
- who with his lance in rest pierces him through the face and brain.
- His cousin vows vengeance for his death,
- but Sir Floridas quickly disposes of him.
- Sir Raynald, the renegade, proudly presses in;
- but Sir Richer, of the Round Table, pierces him with a spear.
- Sir Florent and his five score knights are sorely pressed.
- The one side shout "Lo-

- Whens ledys with longe speris lasschens to-gedyrs,
And Arthure one oure syde, whens theyme oghte ayled.
- 2804 Than *syr* florent and Floridas in fewtyre þey caste,
ffruschens one alle þe ffrape, and biernes affrayede;
ffellis fyve at þe frounte thare they fyrste enteride,
And, or they ferke forthire, fele of þese opere!
- 2808 Brenyes browddens they briste, brittenede scheldes,
Bettes and beres downe the best þat þeme byddes;
Alle þat rewlyde in the rowte they rydens awaye,
So rewldy they rere theys ryalle knyghttes!
- 2812 When *syr* Priamous þat prince persayvede theire gamens,
He hade poté in herte þat he ne durst profire;
He wente to *syr* Gawayne, and sais hym þese wordes,—
“Thi price mens fore thi praye putt are alle undyre,
2816 They are with Sarazenes over-sette mo þans sevene
hundreth
Of þe Sowdanes knyghtes owt of sere londes;
Walde þow suffire me, *syr*, for sake of thi Criste,
With a soppe of thi mene suppowelle theym ones.”
- 2820 “I grouche not,” *quod* Gawayne, “þe gree es þaire awene!
They mone hafe gwerddouns full grett graunt of my
lorde!
Bot the freke mens of Fraunce fraiste theme selfene,
ffrekes faughte noghte þeire fille this fyftene wyntter!
- 2824 I wille noghte stire with my stale half a stede lenghe,
Bot they be stedde with more stuffe thane one þone stede
hovys.”
- Thane *syr* Gawayne was warre with-owttyne þe wode
hemmes,
Wyes of þe Westfale appone wyght horsez,
2828 Walopande wodely, as þe waye forthes,
With alle þe wapyns i-wys that to þe werre longez;
The erle Antele the olde the avawmwarde he buskes,
Ayerande one ayther hande heghte thosande knyghtez;
2832 He pelours and pavyssers passede alle nombyre,
That ever any prynce lede purvayede in erthe!

raine,” the other
“Arthur.”

Sir Florent and
Sir Floridas per-
form great deeds
of valour.

Sir Priamus be-
seeches Gawaine
that he may help
Arthur's knights
against the Sara-
cens.

Sir Gawaine de-
clares that they
have only just
enough to do to
please them.

He sees the main
body of the enemy
approaching,

headed by the
Earl Antele, who
leads 8,000
knights.

Than þe duke of Lorryne dresesse thare aftyre,
With dowbille of þe Duche-mene, þat doughtty ware
holdene;

- 2836 Paynymes of Pruysslande, prekkers fullē noble,
Come prekkande be-fore with Priamows knyghttez.

The Earl is indignant that Arthur's knights should venture to resist so great a host.

Than saide the erle Antelete to Algere his broþer,—
“Me angers earnestly at Arthures knyghtez!

- 2840 Thus enkerly one an oste awnters þeme selfene;
They willē be owtrayedē anone, are undrone ryngē,
Thus folily one a felde to fyghte with us alle!
Bot thay be fesede in faye, ferly me thynkes!

They had better retreat while they are able.

- 2844 Walde they purposse take, and passe one theirē wayes,
Prike home to theirē prynce, and theirē pray leve,
They myghtē lenghenē theirē lyfē, and lossenē bott littillē!
It wolde lyghte my herte, so helpe me oure Lorde!”

Sir Alger, his brother, says that though they are so few they are a match for an army.

- 2848 “Sir,” sais *syr* Algere, “thay hafe littillē usede
To be owtrayedē withe oste; me angers þe more!
The fayreste schallē be fullē feye, þat in oure floke ryddez,
Alls fewe as they bene, are they the felde leve!”

Sir Gawaine rejoices at having some work to do, and encourages his knights.

- 2852 **T**hanē gud Gawayne, gracious and noble,
Alle with glorious gle he gladdis his knyghtes;
“Gloppyns noghte, gud mene, for gletērand scheldes,
ʒofē ʒone gadlyngez be gaye one ʒone gret horses!

- 2856 Banerettez of Bretayne, buskes up ʒour hertes!
Bees noghte baiste of ʒone boyes, ne of ʒaire bryghte wedis!
We sallē blenke theirē boste for alle theirē bolde profire!
Als bouxome as birde es in bede to hir lorde,

- 2860 ʒeffe we feghte to daye, þe felde schallē be owrs!
The fekillē faye sallē faile, and fallssede be distroyede!
ʒone folk is one ffrountere, unfraistede theyme semes;
Thay make faythe and faye to þe fend selvenē!

Great shall be the rewards and joys of victory.

- 2864 We sallē in this viage victoures be holdene,
And avautede with voycez of valyant biernēz;
Praysede with pryncez in prēsence of lordes,
And luffedē with ladyes in dyverse londes!

- 2868 Aughte never sicke honoure none of oure elders,

- Unwynne ne Absolone, ne none of theis *oper* !
 Whene we are moste in destresse, Marie we mene,¹
 That es oure maisters seyne, *pat* he myche traistez ;
- 2872 Melys of *pat* mylde qwene, that menskes us alle ;
 Who so meles of *pat* mayde, myskaries he never !”
 Be þese wordes ware saide, they ware noghte ferre behynde
 Bot the lenghe of a launde, and Lorayne askryes ;
- 2876 Was never siche a justynges at journe in erthe,
 In the vale of Josephate, as gestes us telles,
 Whene Julyus and Joatalle ware juggede to dy,
 As was whene þe ryche mene of þe rownde table
- 2880 Ruschede in-to þe rowte one ryalle stedes !
 ffor so rathely þay rusche with roselde speris,
 That the raskaille was rade, and rane to þe grefes,
 And karede to *pat* courte as cowardes for ever !
- 2884 “*Peter* !” sais syr Gawayne, “this gladdez myne herte !
 That þone gedlynges are gone, that made gret nowmbre !
 I hope that thees harlottez salle harme us bot littille,
 ffore they wille hyde theme in haste with-in þone holte
 enis !
- 2888 Thay are feware one felde þan þay were fyrste nombirdes,
 Be fourrty thousand in faythe, for alle theyre faire hostes.”
 Bot one Jolyan of Jene, a geante fulls howge,
 Has joneded one *syr* Jerant a justis of Walis ;
- 2892 Thorowe a jerownde schelde he jogges hym thorowe,
 And a fyne gesserawnte of gentille mayles !
 Joynter and gemows he jogges in sondyre !
 One a jambe stede þis jurnee he makes ;
- 2896 Thus es þe geante for-juste, that errawnte Jewe,
 And Gerarde es jocunde, and joyes hym þe more !
 Than the genatours of Genne enjoynes att ones,
 And frykis one þe frowntere wells a fyve hundreth ;
- 2900 A freke highte *syr* ffederike, with fulls fele *oper*,
 fferkes one a frusche, and fresclyche askryes
 To fyghte with oure fforreours, *pat* one felde hovis ;

Let them put
their trust in
Mary.

The enemy come
upon them.

Never was there
such a jousting.
Even that in the
valley of Jehosa-
phat was not
equal to it.

The rascal rout
run, but the rich
men of the Round
Table fight
valiantly.

Gawaine rejoices
at the flight of
the rabble.

A huge giant is
slain by a Justice
of Wales.

Sir Frederick at-
tacks the British
forayers.

¹ *nenene* erased, and *mene* written in margin.

The knights of
the Round Table
advance and fight
valiantly.

- And thane the ryalle renkkes of þe rownde table
 2904 Rade furthe fullē earnestly, and rydis themē agaynes,
 Mellis with the medillē warde, bot they ware illē machede;
 Of siche a grett multytude was mēvayle to here.
 Seyne at þe assemble the Sarazenes discovers
 2908 The soveraynge of Sessoyne, that salvede was never;
 Gyawntis for-justede with gentille knyghtes,
 Thorowe gesserawntes of Jene jaggede to þe herte!
 They hewe thorowe helmes hawtayne biernez,
 2912 þat þe hiltede swerdes to þaire hertes rynnys!
 Than þe renkes renownde of the rownd table
 Ryffes and ruyssches downe renayede wrechis;
 And thus they drevene to þe dede dukes and erles,
 2916 Alle þe dreghe of þe daye, with dredfullē werkes!

Sir Priamus and
his followers de-
sert to the side
of Arthur's men.

- Thane syr Priamours þe prynce, in presens of lordes,
 Presez to his penowne, and pertly it hentes;
 Revertede it redily, and a-waye rydys
 2920 To þe ryalle rowte of þe rownde table;
 And heyly his retenuz raykes hym affyre,
 ffor they his resone had rede on his schelde ryche.
 Owte of þe scheltrone þey schede, as schepe of a folde,
 2924 And steris furth to þe stowre, and stode be þeire lorde!
 Seyne they sent to þe duke, and saide hym þise wordes,—
 “We hafe bene thy sowdeours this sex ȝere and more;
 We forsake þe to daye be serte of owre lorde!
 2928 We sewe to oure soveraynge in sere kynges londis;
 Us defawtes oure feez of þis foure wyntteres;
 Thow art feble and false, and noghte bot faire wordes;
 Oure wages are werede owte, and þi werre endide,
 2932 We maye with oure wirchipe weend whethire us lykis!
 I red þowe trette of a trewe, and trofle no lengere,
 Or þow salls tyne of thi tale ten thosande or evenes.”
 “ffya debles!” saide þe duke, “the devellē have þour bones!
 2936 The dawngere of þon dogges drede schallē I never!
 We salls dele this daye, be dedes of armes,
 My dede and my ducherye, and my dere knyghtes!

They upbraid the
Duke of Lorraine
for not having
paid them their
wages.

The Duke an-
swers furiously.

- Siche sowdeours as þe I sett bot att lyttillē,
 2940 That sodanly in defawte for-sakes theire lorde!"
 The duke in his schelde and dreches no lengere,
 Drawes him a dromedarie, with dredfullē knyghtez;
 Graythes to *syr* Gawayne with fullē gret nowmbyre
- 2944 Of gomes of Gernaide, that grevous are holdenē;
 Thas fresche horsesede menē to þe frownt rydes,
 ffelles of oure fforrecours be fourtty at ones!
 They hade foughttenē before with a fyve hundrethe;
 2948 It was no ferly in faythe, þofe they faynt waxenē.
 Thane *syr* Gawayne was grefede, and grypps his spere,
 And gyrdez in agayne with galyarde knyghttez;
 Metes þe maches of mees and melles hym thorowe,
- 2952 As man of þis medillē erthe, þat moste hade grevedē:
 Bot on Chastelayne, a chylde of þe kynges chambyre,
 Was warde to *syr* Wawayne of þe weste marches,
 Cheses to *syr* Cheldride, a cheftayne noble,
- 2956 With a chasyng spere he chokkes hym thurghē!
 This chekke hymē eschewede be chauncez of armes;
 So þay chase þat childe, eschape may he never!
 Bot one Swyane of Swecy, with a swerde egge,
- 2960 The swyers swyre-bane he swappes in sondyre!
 He swounande diede, and on þe swarthe lengede,
 Sweltes ewynne swiftly, and swanke he no more!
 Than *syr* Gawayne gretes with his gray eghne;
- 2964 The guyte was a gude mane, begynnande of armes:
 ffore the charry childe so his chere chawngide,
 That the chillande watire one his chekes rynnyde!
 "Woo es me," *quod* Gawayne, "that I ne wetenē hade;
 2968 I salle wage for that wye alle þat I welde,
 Bot I be wrokenē on that wye, that thus has hym won-
 dyde!"
- He dresses hym drerily, and to þe duke rydes,
 Bot one *syr* Dolphyne the derfe dyghte hym agaynes,
 2972 And *syr* Gawayne hym gyrd with a grym launce,
 That the groundenē spere glade to his herte!

He charges Ar-
thur's knights on
a dromedary.

Makes a great
slaughter of the
forayers.

Sir Gawaine
grasps his spear.

Child-Chatelaine
slays Sir Chil-
dred,

and is slain by
Swyan.

Gawaine grieves
for the Child.

He slays one Sir
Dolphin.

- Then Hardolf,
happy in arms,
- 2976 And egerly he hente owte, and hurte anoþer,
An haythene knyght, Hardolfe, happye in armes ;
Sleyghly in at the slotte slyttes hym thorowe,
That the slydande spere of his hande sleppes !
Thare es slayne in þat slope, be elagere of his hondes,
and sixty more. Sixty slongene in a slade of sleghe men of armes !
- 2980 þofe *syr* Gawaynne ware wo, he wayttes hym by,
And was warre of þat wye that the childe wondyde,
He avenges the
Child, And with a swerde swiftly he swappes him thorowe,
That he swyftly swelte, and on þe erthe swounes !
- 2984 And thane he raykes to þe rowte, and ruysches one helmys ;
Riche hawberkes he rente, and rasede schyldes ;
and cuts his way
through the
enemy. Rydes one a rawndoune, and his rayke holdes ;
Thorow owte þe rerewarde he holdes wayes,
- 2988 And thare raughte in the reyne this ryalle þe ryche,
And rydez in-to the rowte of þe rownde table.
- The great deeds
of Arthur's chi-
valrous men se-
cure the victory.
- Thane oure chevalrous men changene their horsez,
Chases and choppes downe cheftaynes noble !
- 2992 Hittes full hertely on helmes and scheldes,
Hurtes and hewes downe haythene knyghtez !
Ketelle hattes they cleve evene to þe scholdirs !
Was never sicke a clamour of capitaynes in erthe !
- 2996 Thare was kynges sonnes kaughte, curtays and noble,
And knyghtes of þe contre, that knawene was ryche ;
Lordes of Lorayne and Lombardye bothene.
Laughe was and lede in with our lele knyghttez ;
- 3000 Thas þat chasade that daye, their chaunce was bettire,
Swiche a cheke at a chace eschewed theyme never !
- Sir Florent
presses on with
five score
knights.
- When *syr* florent be fyghte had þe felde wonene,
He fferkes ine before with fyve score knyghttez ;
- 3004 Their prayes and their prersoneres passes one aftyre,
With pylours, and pavyssers, and pryse mene of armes.
Thane gudly *syr* Gawayne gydes his knyghttez,
Gas in at þe gayneste, as gydes hym telles,
- Sir Gawaine fol-
lows with cau-
tion,
- 3008 ffore greffe of a garysone of full gret lordes
Sulde noghte gripeupe his gere, ne swyche grame wurche :

- ffore-thy they stode at the straytez, and with his stale
 hovede,
 Tille his prayes ware paste the pathe that he dredis ;
 3012 Whens they the cete myghte see that the kyng seggede, and sees the city
which Arthure
was besieging
won on the same
day ;
 Sothely the same daye was wit asawte wonnens,
 An hawrawde hyes before, the beste of the lordes,
 Hom at þe herbergage, owt of tha hyghe londes ;
 3016 Tornys tytte to þe tente, and to the kynges telles
 Alle the tale sothely, and how they hade syde ;—
 “Alle thy forreours are fere, that forrayede with-owt tyne, for Arthure had
been told of the
victory of his
knights by an
herald,
 Sir fflorent, and syr ffloidas, and alle thy ferse knyghtez :
 3020 Thay hafe forrayede and foghtens with fulle gret nowm-
 byre,
 And fele of thy foo-mens has broghte owt of lyffe !
 Oure wirchipfulle wardayne es wele eschevyde,
 ffor he has wonne to-daye wirchipp for evere !
 3024 He has Dolfyns slayne, and þe duke takyne !
 Many dowghty es dede by dynt of his hondes !
 He has prersoners price, prynce and erles,
 Of þe richeste blode þat regnys in erthe !
 3028 Alle thy chevallrous mens faire are eschewede,
 Bot a childe Chasteleynne myschance es befallens.”
 “Hawtayne,” sais þe king, “harawde be Criste !
 Thow has helyd myns herte, I hete the for-sothe !
 3032 I jife the in Hamptone a hundreth pownde large.”
 The kyng þan to assawte he sembles his knyghtez, and, assembling
his knights, as-
saults the city.
 With somercastelle and sowe appone sere halves ;
 Skystis his skotiferis, and skayles the wallis,
 3036 And iche wache has his warde with wiese mens of armes.
 Thane boldly þay buske, and bendes engynes,
 Payses in pylotes and proves theire castes ;
 Mynsteris and mason dewes they malle to þe erthe,
 3040 Chirches and chapelles chalke whitte blawnchede.
 Stone tepelles fulle styffe in þe strete ligges,
 Chawmbyrs with chymnes, and many cheefe inns ;
 Paysede and pelid downe playsterede wallis ;

and how Sir Ga-
waine had won
mighty honour.

Then he rejoiced
and gave a hun-
dred pounds lar-
ges,

They carry all
before them.

- 3044 The pyne of þe pople was pete for to here!
 Thane þe ducheþ hire dyghte with damesels ryche,
 The cowntas of Crasyns with hir clere madyns,
 Knelis downe in the kynnelles thare the kyng hoveþe,
- 3048 On a coverede horse comlyli arayede;
 They knewe hym by contenance, and criede fulle
 lowde,—
 “Kyng crownede of kynde, take kepe to þese wordes!
 We be-seke þow, *syr*, as soveraynge and lorde,
- 3052 That þe safe us to daye, for sake of þoure Criste!
 Sende us some socoure, and saughte with the pople,
 Or þe cete be sodaynly with assawte wonnene!”
 He weres his vesere with a vowt noble,
- 3056 With vesage vertuous, this valyant bierne;
 Moles to hir mildly with fulle meke wordes,—
 “Salle no mysse do þow, ma-dame, þat to me lenges;
 I gyf þow chartire of pes, and þoure cheefe maydens,
- 3060 The childire and þe chaste men, the chevalrous knyghtez;
 The duke es in dawngere, dredis it bott lyttlylle!
 He salle I dene þe fulle wele, dout þow noghte elles.”
 Thane sent he one iche a syde to certayne lordez,
- 3064 ffor to leve þe assawte, the cete was foldene;
 With þe erle eldeste sons he sent hym þe kayes,
 And seside þe same dyghte, be sent of þe lordes:
 The duke to Dovere es nyghte, and alle his dere knyghtez,
- 3068 To duelle in dawngere and dole þe dayes of hys lyve,
 Thare fleede at the ferrere þate folke withowt tynenomyre,
 ffor ferde of *syr* fflorent and his fers knyghtez;
 Voydes the cete and to the wode rynnys,
- 3072 With vetaile, and vesselle, and vestoure so ryche:
 Thay buske upe a banere abowne þe brode þates
 Of *syr* fflorent in ffay, so fayne was he never!
 The knyghte hovys on a hylle, beholde to þe wallys,
- 3076 And saide, “I see be þone syngne the cete es oures!”
 Sir Arthure enters anon with hostes arayede,
 Evene at þe undrone etles to lenge;

The ladies sue
for mercy.

Arthur promises
that no hurt shall
befall them.

The city is sur-
rendered.

The Duke is sent
to Dover as a
prisoner.

Many of the in-
habitants escape.

The knights see
the sign of the
capture of the
city.

Arthur preserves
strict discipline.

- In iche levere on lowde the kyng did crye,
 3080 Of payne of lyf and lym and lesyngs of londes,
 That no lele ligemane that to hym lonngede
 Sulde lye be no ladysse, ne be no lele maydyns,
 Ne be no burgeesse wyffe, better ne werse ;
 3084 Ne no biernez myse-bide, that to þe burghe longede.

- Whene þe kyng Arthure hade lely conquerid,
 And the castelle coverede of þe kythe riche,
 Alle þe crowelle and kene, be craftes of armes,
 3088 Captayns and constables, knewe hym for lorde.
 He devysede and delte to dyverse lordez,
 A dower for þe ducheze and hir dere childire ;
 Wroghte wardaynes by wytte to welde alle þe londez,
 3092 That he had wonnens of werre, thorow his wise knyghtez.
 Thus in Lorayne he lenges as lord in his awene,
 Settez lawes in the lande, as hym leefe toghte ;
 And one þe Lammese daye to Lucerne he wendez,
 3096 Lengez thare at layserre with lykynges i-nowe ;
 Thare his galays ware graythede, a fulls gret nombyre,
 Alle gletevand as glase, undire grene hyllys,
 With cabanes coverede for kynges anoyntede,
 3100 With clothes of clere golde for knyghtez and oþer ;
 Sone stowede theire stuffe, and stablede þeire horses,
 Strekes streke over þe strem in-to þe straye londez.
 Now he moves his myghte with myrthes of herte,
 3104 Overe mowntes so hye, þase mervailous wayes ;
 Gosse in by Goddarde, the garette be wynnyngs,
 Graythes the garnisone grisely wondes !
 Whene he was passede the heghte, than the kyng hovys
 3108 With his hole bataylle, be-haldande abowte,
 Lukande one Lumbarddye, and one lowde melys,—
 “ In þone lykande londe, lorde be I thynke.”
 Thane they cayre to Combe, with kynges anoyntede,
 3112 That was kyde of þe coste, kay of alle oþer :

Arthur provides
for the govern-
ment of Lorraine
which he had
conquered.

At Lammas he
goes to Lucerne.

His fair galleys
are assembled.

He leads his
forces over the
high mountains
by marvellous
ways ;

passes the St.
Gothard after de-
feating the gar-
rison ;

looks down on
Lombardy, and
advances to
Como.

- Sir florent and *syr* flolidas þan fowndes before,
 With ffreke mene of ffrauce welle a fyve hundreth ;
 To þe cete unsene thay soghte at þe gayneste,
 Sir Florent plants 3116 And sett an embuschement, als þeme-selfe lykys ;
 an ambush,
 Thane ischewis owt of þat cete fulle sone be þe morne,
 Slale discoverours, skyftes theire horses ;
 Than skyftes þes skoverours, and skippes one hyllis,
 3120 Discoveres for skulkers that they no skathe lymppene ;
 Poveralle and pastorelles passede one aftyre,
 With porkes to pasture at the price þates ;
 Boyes in þe subarbis bourdene ffulle heghe,
 3124 At a bare synglere that to þe bente rynnys.
 Thane brekes oure buschement, and the brigge wynnes,
 and captures the
 city.
 Brayedez in-to þe burghe with baners displayede,
 Stekes and stablis thorowe that them aþayne-stondes ;
 3128 ffowre stretis, or þay stynte, they stroyene fore evere !
 The city Combe
 is won.
 Now es the conquerour in Combe, and his courte holdes
 With-in the kyde castelle, with kynges enoyntede ;
 Be consaillez the commons þat to þe kyth lengez,
 3132 Comfourthes þe carefull with knyghtly wordez ;
 Made a captayne kene a knyghte of hys awene,
 Bot alle the contré and he fulle sone ware accordide.
 The Lord of
 Milan sends to
 offer submission
 and tribute.
 3136 The syre of Melane herde saye þe cete was wonnene,
 And send to Arthure sertayne lordes,
 Grete sommes of golde, sexti horse chargegid,
 Be-soghte hym as soverayne to socoure þe pople,
 And saide he wolde sothely be sugette for ever,
 3140 And make hym servece and suytte for his sere londes ;
 ffor plesaunce of Pawnce, and of Pownte Tremble,
 ffor Pyse, and for Pavy, he profers fulle large,
 Bothe purpur, and palle, and precious stonys,
 3144 Palfrayes for any prynce, and provede stedes ;
 And ilke a þere for Melane a melione of golde,
 Mekely at Martynmesse to menske with his hordes ;
 And ever withouttyne askynge he and his ayers
 3148 Be homagers to Arthure, whilles his lyffe lastis.

The kyngs be his concelle a condethe hym sendis,
And he es comens to Combe, and knewe hym as lorde.

He pays homage
to Arthur at
Como.

3152 **I**nto Tuskané he tournez, whene þus wele tymede,
Takes townnes fulls tyte with towrres fulls heghe;

Arthur enters
Tuscany,

Walles he welte downe, wondyd knyghtez,
Towrres he turnes, and turmentez þe pople!
Wroghte wedewes fulls wlonke, wrotherayle synges,

3156 Ofte wery and wepe, and wryngens theire handis;
And alle he wastys with werre, thare he awaye rydez;
Thaire welthes and theire wonnyges, wandrethe he
wroghte!

and ravages the
country.

Thus they spryngens and sprede, and sparis bot lyttill,
3160 Spoylles dispetouslye, and spillis theire vynes;
Spendis un-sparely, þat sparede was lange,
Spedis them to Spolett with speris inewe!
ffro Spayne in-to Spruyslande the worde of hyme
sprynges,

3164 And spekynges of his spencis, disspite es fulls hugge!
Towarde Viterbe this valyant avires the reynes;
Avissely in þat vale he vetailles his biernez,
With vernage, and oþer wyne, and venysones bakens;

He pitches his
camp in the Vale
of Viterbo.

3168 And one the vicounte londes he visez to lenge.
Vertely the avawmwarde voydez theire horsez;
In the Vertennone vale, the vines imangez,
Thare suggeournes this souerayne, with solace in herte,

3172 To see whens the senatours sent any wordes;
Revelle with riche wyne, riotes hym selfens,
This roy with his ryalle mene of þe rownde table,
With myrthis, and melodye, and many kyns gamnes;

The king and his
knights make
great merriment.

3176 Was never meriere men made one this erthe!

Bot one a Saterdaye at none, a sevenyghte thare aftyre,
The konyngeste cardynalle that to the courte lengede
Knelis to þe conquerour, and karpes thire wordes,—

The cunningest
Cardinal of Rome
is sent to him,

3180 Prayes hym for þe pes, and profyrs fulls large,
To hafe pete of þe Pope, þat put was at-undere;
Be-soghte hym of surrawns, for sake of oure Lorde,

and offers that
the Pope shall
crown him as
Sovereign in
Rome.

3184 Bot a sevenyghte daye to pay ware alle sembled,
And they schulde sekerlye hym see the Sonondaye
þerafter,

Hostages are
given for the
truth of his
words.

In the cete of Rome, as soveraynge and lorde ;
And crowne hym kyndly with krysumede hondes,
With his ceptre, as soveraynge and lorde :

3188 Of this undyrtakynge ostage are comyns,
Of ayers fulls avenaunt awughte score childrenne,
In toges of tarsse fulls richelye attyrde,
And betuke them the kyng, and his clere knyghttes.

3192 When they had tretide thierr trewe, with trowmpynge
þerafter

The Roman Sena-
tors are solemnly
feasted.

They tryne unto a tente, whare tables whare raysede ;
The kyng hym selfe es sette, and certayne lordes,
Undyre a sylure of sylke sawghte at the burdez :

3196 Alle the senatours are sette sere be þam one,
Serfed solemply with selcouthe metes :

The kyng myghty of myrthe, with his milde wordes,
Rehetez the Romayne in his riche table,

3200 Comforthes the cardynalle so kynghtly hym selven ;
And this roye ryalle, as romawns us tellis,
Reverence the Romayns in his riche table ;
The tawghte mene and þe conynge, whens them tyme
thoghte,

3204 Tas theire lefe at þe kyng, and tornede agayne ;
To þe cete þat nyghte thaye soughte at þe gayneste,
And thus the ostage of Rome with Arthure es levede.

Arthur glorifies
himself for his
great success.

3208 **T**han this roy royalle rehersys theis wordes,—
“Now may we revelle and riste, fore Rome es
oure awene !

Make oure ostage at ese, þise avenaunt childyrens,
And luk þe hondens them alle that in myne oste lengez ;
The emperour of Almayne, and alle theis este marches,

3212 We salle be overlynge of alle þat ons the erthe lengez !
We wille by þe crosse dayes encroche þeis loydez,
And at þe Crystynmesse daye be crowned ther-aftyre ;

He will be crown-
ed at Christmas

- Ryngne in my ryalltes, and holde my rownde table,
 3216 Withe the rentes of Rome, as me beste lykys :
 Syne graythe *over þe* grette see with gud men^e of armes,
 To revenge the renke that *one* the rode dyede !”
 Thane this comlyche knyge, as cronycles tellys,
 3220 Bownnys brathely to bede with a blythe herte ;
 Of he slynges with sleghte, and slakes gyrdille,
 And fore slewthe of slomowre *one* a slepe fallis .
 Bot be ane aftyre mydnyghte *alle* his mode changede ;
 3224 He mett in the morne while full^e *mer*vaylous dremes !
 And whens his dredefulle drem whas drefens to *þe* ende,
 The kynge dares for dowte dye as he scholde ;
 Sendes aftyre phylosophers, and his affraye telles,—
 3228 “ Sene I was formede in fayth, so ferde whas I never !
 ffor-thy rawnsakes redyly, and rede me my swefennys,
 And I salle redily and ryghte rehersens the sothe :
 Me-thoughte I was in a wode willed myn^e one,
 3232 That I ne wiste no waye whedire þat I scholde,
 ffore wolvez, and whilde swynn^e, and wykkyde bestez,
 Walkede in that wastern^e, wathes to seche ;
 Thare lyouns full^e lothely lykkyde þeire tuskes,
 3236 Alle fore lapyng of blude of my lele knyghtez !
 Thurghe þat foreste I flede, thare floures whare heghe,
 ffor to fele me for ferde of tha foule thynggez ;
 Merkede to a medowe with montayngnes enclosyde,
 3240 The meryeste of medill-erthe that men^e myghte be-holde !
 The close was in compas castyn^e *alle* abowte,
 With claver and clereworte cleder even^e over ;
 The vale was even^e rownde with vynes of silver,
 3244 Alle with grapys of golde, gretter ware never !
 Enhorilde with arborye and alkyns trees,
 Erberis full^e honeste, and byrdez þere undyre ;
 Alle froytez foddennid was þat floreschede in erthe,
 3248 faire frithed in frawnke appon^e tha free bowes ;
 Whas thare no downkynge of dewe that oghte dere
 scholde,

in Rome, and
hold his Round
Table there.

He goes to bed
and dreams.

He sends for his
philosophers, and
tells them the
dream.

He was in a
wood among wild
beasts,

which were lick-
ing from their
teeth the blood
of his knights.

He flies to a
beautiful meadow
enclosed with
mountains, and
having vines of
silver and grapes
of gold.

A beautiful
duchess descends
from the clouds,

dressed in gorge-
ous apparel,

who whirled a
strange wheel
with her hands,

upon which was
a chair made of
silver, and orna-
mented with car-
buncles.

Six kings, cling-
ing to the wheel,
strive to reach
the chair, but
they all fall to
the ground.
Each one of them
speaks sepa-
rately, and la-
ments his life
past and gone,
which had been
spent in riot and
wickedness,

therefore he is
damned for ever.

The first was a
little man with
eyes brighter
than silver.

- With þe drowghte of þe daye alle drye ware þe flores!
Than discendis in the dale, downe fra þe clowddez,
3252 A duchess dere-worthily dyghte in dyaperde wedis,
In a surcott of sylke fulls selkouthely hewede,
Alle with loyotour overlaide lowe to þe hemmes,
And with ladily lappes the lenghe of a þerde,
3256 And alle redily reversside with rebanes of golde,
Bruchez and besautez, and oþer bryghte stonys,
With hir bake and hir breste was brochede alle over,
With kelle and with corenalle clenliche arrayede,
3260 And þat so comly of colour one knowene was never!
A-bowte cho whirllide a whele with hir whitte hondez,
Over-whelme alle qwayntely þe whele as cho scholde;
The rowelle whas rede golde with ryalle stonys,
3264 Raylide with reched and rubyces inewe;
The spekes was splentide alle with speltis of silver,
The space of a spere lenghe springande fulls faire;
There one was a chayere of chalke-whytte silver,
3268 And chekyrde with charebocke chawngynge of hewes;
Appone þe compas ther clewde kyngis one rawe,
With coronns of clere golde þat krakede in sondire:
Sex was of þat setille fulls sodaynliche fallene,
3272 Ilke a segge by hyme selfe, and saide theis wordez,—
'That ever I regnede one þir rog, me rewes it ever!
Was never roye so riche that regnede in erthe!
Whene I rode in my rowte, roughete I noghte elles,
3276 Bot revaye, and revelle, and rawnsons the pople!
And thus I drife forthe my dayes, whilles I dreghe
myghte,
And there-fore derflyche I am dampnede for ever!'
The laste was a litylle man that laide was be-nethe,
3280 His leskes laye alle lene and latheliche to schewe,
The lokkes lyarde and longe the lenghe of a þerde,
His lire and his lyghame lamede fulls sore;
þe two eyne of the byeryne was bryghttere þane silver,
3284 The toþer was þalower the the þolke of a naye,—

- 'I was lorde,' *quod* the lede, 'of londes i-newe,
 And alle ledis me lowttede that lengede in erthe;
 And nowe es lefte me no lappe my lygham to hele,
 3288 Bot lightly now am I loste, leve iche mane the sothe!'
 He had been lord
of many lands,
but now was lost.
- The secunde *syr* forsothe þat sewede theme aftyre,
 Was sekerare to my sighte, and saddare in armes;
 Ofte he syghede unsownde, and said theis wordes,—
 3292 'On þone see hafe I sittene, as soverayne and lorde,
 And ladys me lovede to lappe in theyre armes;
 And nowe my lordchippes are loste, and laide for ever!'
 The second had
been sovereign of
the sea, and loved
of ladies.
- The thirde thorowely was throo, and thikke in the
 schuldrys,
 3296 A thra man to thrette of, there thretty ware gaderide;
 His dyademe was droppede downe, dubbyde with stonys,
 Endente alle with diamawndis, and dighte for þe nonis;
 'I was dredde in my dayes,' he said, 'in dyverse rewmes,
 3300 And now dampned to þe dede, and dole es the more!'
 He had been
mightily feared
in his day.
- The fourte was a faire mane, and forsey in armes,
 þe fayreste of fegure that fourmede was ever!
 'I was frekke in my faithe,' he said, 'whilles I one
 fowlde regned,
 3304 ffamows in fferre londis, and floure of alle kynges;
 Now es my face defadide, and foule es me hapsede,
 ffor I am fallene fro ferre, and frendles by-levyde!'
 The fourth was
very fair, but foul
mischance had
now happened to
him.
- The fifte was a faire mane þane fele of thies oþer,
 3308 A fforsey mane and a ferse, with fomand lippis;
 He fongede faste one þe feleyghes, and fayled his armes,
 Bot ȝit he failede and felle a fyfty fote large;
 Bot ȝit he sprange and sprete, and spraddene his armes,
 3312 And one þe spere lenghe spekes, he spekes þire wordes—
 'I was in Surrye a syr, and sett be myne one,
 As soverayne and seyngnour of sere kynges londis;
 Now of my solace I am fulls sodanly fallene,
 3316 And forsake of my syne, þone cete es me rewede!'
 The fifth was very
fierce and violent.
- The sexte hade a sawtere semliche bowndene,
 With a surepel of silke sewede fulls faire,
The sixth had a
psalter well-
bound, a harp,
and a sling.

- A harpe and a hande-slynge with harde flynte stones ;
 3320 What harmes he has hente he halowes fulle sone,—
 ‘I was demede in my dayes,’ he said, ‘of dedis of armes
 One of the doughtyeste that duelled in erthe ;
 Bot I was merride one molde in my moste strenghethis,
 3324 With this maydens so mylde, þat mofes us alle.’
 Two kynges ware clymbande, and claverande one heghe,
 The creste of þe compas they covette fulle þerne ;
 ‘This chaire of charbokle,’ they said, ‘we chalange
 here aftyre,
 3328 As two of þe cheffeste chosene in erthe!’
 The childre ware chalke-whitte, chekys and oþer,
 Bot the chayere abownne chevede they never :
 The forthirmaste was freely with a frount large,
 3332 The faireste of fyssnanny þat fourmede was ever ;
 And he was buskede in a blee of a blewe noble,
 With flourdelice of golde fioreschede al over ;
 The toþer was cledde in a cote alle of clene silver,
 3336 With a comliche crosse corvene of golde,
 fflowre crosselettes krafty by þe crosse rifies,
 And ther-by knewe I the kyngs, þat crystned hyme
 semyde.
 Arthur accosts the Duchess, who
 welcomes him. 3340 **T**hane I went to þat wlonke, and wynly hire gretis,
 And cho said, ‘welcome i-wis! wele arte thou
 fowndene ;
 The aughte to wirchipe my wille, and thou wele cowthe,
 Of alle the valyant men that ever was in erthe ;
 ffore alle thy wirchipe in werre by me has thou wonnene,
 3344 I haf bene frendely freke, and fremmede till oþer ;
 That has þow fowndene in faithe, and fele of þi biernez,
 ffore I fellid downe *syr* Frolle with frowarde knyghtes ;
 ffore-thi the fruytes of Fraunce are freely thynne awene.
 He is chosen to achieve the chair,
 3348 Thow salle þe chayere escheve, I chese þe my-selfene,
 Be-fore alle þe cheftaynes chosene in this erthe.’
 Scho lifte me up lightly with hir lene hondes,
 And sette me softly in the see, þe septr me rechede ;
 and sit therein.

- 3352 Craftely with a kambe cho kembede myne hevede,
 That the krispane kroke to my crownne raughte ;
 Dressid one me a diademe, that dighte was full^e faire, The kingly orna-
ments are given
to him.
 And syne profres me a pome pighte full^e of faire stonys,
- 3356 Enamelde with azoure, the erth there-^{one} depayntide,
 Selkylde with the salte see appone sere halves,
 In sygne þat I sothely was soverayne in erthe :
 Than broght cho me a brande with full^e bryghte hilt^e, A sword with
bright hilt is
brought for him.
- 3360 And bade me brawndysche þe blade, ' þe brande es myne brought for him.
 awene :
 Many swayne with þe swynge has the swtte levede ;
 ffor whilles thow swanke with the swerde, it swykkede
 þe never.'
 Than raykes cho with roo, and riste whens hir likede,
- 3364 To þe ryndes of þe wode, richere was never ;
 Was no pomarie so pighte of prynceez in erthe,
 Ne nonne apparaylle so prowde, bot paradys one.
 Scho bad þe bowes scholde bewe downe, and bryng to He is taken to
the wood, and the
boughs are made
to yield their
fruit to him.
 my hondes
- 3368 Of þe beste that they bare one brawnches so heghe ;
 Than they heldede to hir heste all^e holly at ones,
 The hegheste of iche a hirste, I hette þow forsothe :
 Scho bade me fyrthe noghte þe fruyte, bot fonde whilles He is bid take
freely of the
finest.
 me likede,
- 3372 ' fonde of þe fyneste, thow freliche byerne,
 And reche to the ripeste, and ryotte thy selvens !
 Riste, thow ryalle roye, for Rome es thyns awene !
 And I salle redily roll^e the roo at þe gayneste,
- 3376 And reche the þe riche wyne in rynsede coupes.'
 Thane cho wente to the welle by þe wode enis,
 That all^e wellyde of wyne, and wonderliche rynnes ;
 Kaughte up a coppe-full^e, and coverde it faire ; The lady draws
wine for him out
of the stream,
- 3380 Scho bad me dereliche drawe, and drynke to hir selfens : and bids him
drink to her.
 And thus cho lede me abowte the lenghe of an owre,
 With all^e likynge and luffe, þat any lede scholde ;
 Bot at þe myddaye full^e ewyns all hir mode chaunge^{de}, But at mid-day
all was changed.

- 3384 And mad myche manace with mervayllous wordez ;
 When I cryede appone hire, cho kest downe hir browes,
 ' Kyng, thow karpes for noghte, be Criste pat me made !
 ffor thow salls lose this layke, and thi lyfe aftyre !
- 3388 Thow has lyffede in delytte and lordchippes inewe !'
 Abowte scho whirles the whele, and whirles me undire,
 Tille alle my quarters *pat* whille whare qwaste al to peces !
 And with that chayere my chyne was chopped in sondire !
- 3392 And I hafe cheveride for chele, sen me this chance
 happenede.
 Than wakkenyde I i-wys, alle wery for-dremyde,
 And now wate thow my woo, worde as *þe* lykes."
- 3396 "ffreke," sais the philosophre, " thy fortune es passede !
 ffor thow salls fynd hir thi foo, frayste whene the lykes !
 Thow arte at *þe* hegheste, I hette the for-sothe !
 Chalange nowe when thow wille, thow chevys no more !
 Thow has schedde myche blode, and schalkes distroyede,
- 3400 Sakeles in sirquytrie, in sere kynges landis ;
 Schryfe the of thy schame, and schape for thyne ende !
 Thow has a schewyng, *syr* kyng, take kepe *þif* the like !
 ffor thow salls fersely falle with-in fyve wynters !
- 3404 fflownde abbayes in ffraunce, *þe* froytez are theyne awene,
 ffore ffroille, and for fferawnt, and for thir ferse knyghttis,
 That thow fremydly in ffraunce has faye belevede ;
 Take kepe *þitte* of *oper* kynges, and kaste in thyne herte,
- 3408 That were conquerours kydde, and crownede in erthe ;
 The eldeste was Alexandere, *þat* alle *þe* erthe lowttede ;
 The to^{per} Ector of Troye, the chevalrous gume ;
 The thirde Julyus Cesare, *þat* geant was holdene,
- 3412 In iche jorne jentille, ajuggede with lordes ;
 The ferthe was *syr* Judas, a justere fulls nobille,
 The maysterfulls Makabee, the myghttyeste of strenghes ;
 The fyfte was Josue, *þat* joly mane of armes,
- 3416 That in Jerusalem oste fulls myche joye lymppede ;
 The sexte was David *þe* dere, demyd with kynges
 One of *þe* doughtyeste *þat* dubbede was ever,
- She speaks to him fiercely, and tells him that he shall lose his life.
- She gives the wheel a whirl and sends him flying from the chair, bruised and injured.
- The philosophers interpret the dream, and tell Arthur that his good fortune is passed.
- He is to prepare for his end,
- and to found Abbays in France.
- He is bid take warning from the other kings who had tried the chair.
 The first was Alexander ;
 the second Hector ;
 the third Julius Cesar ;
- the fourth Sir Judas, the Maccabee ;
- the fifth Joshua ;
- the sixth was David, who slew great Goliath.

- ffor he slewe with a slynge, be sleyghte of his handis,
 3420 Golyas the grette gome, grymmeste in erthe;
 Syne endittede in his dayes alle the dere psalmes,
 pat in þe sawtire ere sette with selcouthe wordes;
 The two clymbande kynges, I kawe it forsothe,
 3424 Sallē Karolus be callide, the kyng sons of Fraunce;
 He sallē be crowellē and kene, and conquerour holdenē,
 Covere be conqueste contres ynewe;
 He sallē eneroche the crowne that Crist bare hym selfenē,
 3428 And þat lifeliche launce, that lepe to his herte,
 When he was crucyfiede on crose, and alle þe kene naylis,
 Knyghtly he sallē conquere to Cristyne men hondes:
 The toþer sallē be Godfraye, that Gode schallē revenge
 3432 One þe Gud Frydaye with galyarde knyghtes;
 He sallē of Lorrayne be lorde, be leefe of his fadire,
 And syne in Jerusalem myche joye happynē,
 ffor he sallē cover the crosse be craftes of armes,
 3436 And synne be corownde kyngē, with krysme enoyntede;
 Sallē no duke in his dayes sicke destanye happynē,
 Ne sicke myschefe dreghe, whēn trowthe sallē be tryede!
 ffore-thy ffortune þe fetches to fulfille the nowmbyre,
 3440 Alles nynne of þe nobileste namede in erthe;
 This sallē in romance be redde with ryallē knyghttes,
 Rekkenede and renownde with ryotous kynges,
 And demyd one domesdaye, for dedis of armes,
 3444 ffor þe doughtyeste þat ever was duelland in erthe:
 So many clerkis and kynges sallē karpe of þoure dedis,
 And kepe þoure conquestez in cronycle for ever!
 Bot the wolves in the wode, and the whilde bestes,
 3448 Are some wikked menē that werrayes thy rewmes,
 Es entirde in thynē absence to werraye thy pople,
 And alyenys and osten of uncouthē landis:
 Thow getis tydandis I trowe, within tenē dayes,
 3452 That some torfere es tydde, sene thow fro home turnede;
 I rede thow rekkynē and reherse un-reasonable dedis,
 Ore the repenttes fullē rathe allē thi rewthe werkes!

Of the two kings
who were climb-
ing, one should
be called Carolus
of France;

the other God-
frey of Lorraine,
who should re-
cover the true
cross.

Arthur is needed
to make up the
number of the
nine noblest.

He shall be cele-
brated for ever
as the doughtiest
on earth.
Many clerks shall
tell of his deeds.

The wild beasts
are wicked men
that are worrying
his people.

He will have
some tidings
within ten days.

He is bid to re-
pent and amend.

Mane, amende thy mode, or thow myshappene,

3456 And mekely aske mercy for mede of thy saule!"

The king rises
and puts on his
robes.

Thane rysez the riche kynges, and rawghte one his wedys,
A reedde actone of Rosse, the richeste of floures,
A pesane, and a paunsons, and a pris girdille;

3460 And one he henttis a hode of scharlette fulls riche,

A pavys pillione hatt, bat pighte was fulls faire
With perry of þe oryent, and precyous stones;
His gloves gayliche gilte, and graven by þe hemmys,

3464 With graynes of rubyes fulls gracious to schewe:

His hede grehownde, and his bronde, ande no byerne elles,
And bownnes over a brode mede, with breth at his herte;
ffurth he stalkis a styte by þa stille enys,

3468 Stotays at a hey strette, studyande hym one;

He sees a man
approaching in
strange attire,

Att the surs of þe sonne, he sees there commande,
Raykande to Romewarde the redyeste wayes,
A renke in a rownde cloke, with righte rowmme clothes,

3472 With hatte, and with heyghe schone homely and rownde;

With flatte ferthynges the freke was floreschede alle over,
Many schredys and schragges at his skyrttes hynnges,
With scrippe, ande with slawyne, and skalopis i-newe,

who appears like
a pilgrim.

3476 Both pyke and palme, alles pilgram hym scholde:

The gome graythely hym grette, and bade gode morwens;
The kyng lordelye hymselfe, of langage of Rome,
Of Latyns corroumppede alle, fulls lovely hym menys,—

He asks him
whither he is
going,

3480 "Whedire wilnez thowe, wye, walkande thyns onne?

Qwhylls þis werlde es o werre, a wawhte I it holde!
Here es ane enmye with oste, undire þone vynes;
And they see the for-sothe, sorowe the be-tyddes;

3484 Bot þif thow hafe condethe of þe kynges selfens,

and tells him the
dangers of the
way.

Knaves wills kille the, and keppe at thow haves;
And if þou halde þe hey waye, they hente the also,
Bot if thow hastyly hafe helpe of his hende knyghttes."

3488 **T**hans karpes syr Cradoke to the kynges selfens,

The stranger
knight says that
he fears no dan-
gers.

"I sall for-gyffe hym my dede, so me Gode helpe!
Onye grome undire Gode, that one this grownde walkes!

Latte the keneste come, that to þe kyng langes,
 3492 I salle encountre hym as knyghte, so Criste hafe my
 sawle!

ffor thou may noghte reche me, ne areste thy selfene,
 Poſſe thou be richely arayed in fullre riche wedys;
 I wille noghte wonde for no werre, to wende whare me
 likes,

3496 Ne for no wy of this werlde, þat wroghte es ons erthe!
 Bot I wille passe in pilgremage þis pas unto Rome,
 To purchese me *perdonne* of the pape selfene;
 And of paynes of purgatorie be plenerly assoyllede;

He is bound in
 pilgimage to
 Rome.

3500 Thane salle I seke sekirly my soverayne lorde,
 Sir Arthure of Englande, that avenaunt byerne!
 ffor he es in this empire, as hathelle men me telles,
 Ostayande in this oryente with awfullre knyghtes."

Then he has to
 find Arthur of
 England.

3504 "Fro qwyne come þou, kene mane," *quod* þe kyng
 thane,

"That knawes kyng Arthure, and his knyghttes also?
 Was þou ever in his courte, qwylls he in kyth lengede?
 Thow karpes so kyndly, it comforthes myne herte!

Arthur demands
 of the knight who
 he is.

3508 Well wele has þou wente, and wysely þou sechis,
 ffor þou arte Bretowne bierne, as by thy brode speche."

"Me awghte to knowe þe kyng, he es my kydde lorde,
 And I calde in his courte a knyghte of his chambire;

He tells him that
 his name is Sir
 Cradok, a knight
 of Arthur's cham-
 ber, and keeper of
 Caerleon.

3512 Sir Craddoke was I callide, in his courte riche,
 Kepare of Karlyons, undir the kyng selfene;
 Nowe am I cachede owtt of kyth, with kare at my herte,
 And that castelle es cawghte with uncowthe ledys."

3516 Than the comliche kyng kaughte hym in armes,
 Keste of his ketille-hatte, and kyssede hym fullre sone,
 Saide, "welcome, *syr* Craddoke, so Criste mott me helpe!
 Dere cosyns of kynde, thoue coldis myne herte!

The king kisses
 and welcomes Sir
 Cradok.

3520 How faris it in Bretaynne, with alle my bolde berynes?
 Are they brettene, or brynte, or broughte owte of lyve?
 Kene þou me kyndely whatte caase es be-fallens;
 I kepe no credens to crafe, I knawe the for trewe."

Sir Cradok tells
him of the evil
deeds of Modred.

3524 "Sir, thi wardane es wikkede, and wilde of his dedys;
ffor he wandreth has wroghte, sen þou awaye passede;
He has castelles encrochede, and corownde hym selvens,
Kaughte in alle þe rentis of þe rownde tabille;

3528 He devisede þe rewme, and delte as hym likes;
Dubbede of þe Danmarkes, dukes and erlles,
Disseveride þeme sondirwise, and cites distroyede;

He has levied
forces of paynims
and infidels,

To Sarazenes and Sessoynes, appone sere halves,
3532 He has semblede a sorte of selcouthe berynes,
Soveraynes of Surgenale, and sowdeours many,
Of Peyghtes and Paynnymys, and provede knyghttes
Of Irelande and Orgaile, owtlawede berynes;

3536 Alle thaa laddes are knyghttes þat lange to þe mowntes,
And ledynge and lordechipe has alle, alles theme selfe
likes;

And there es *syr* Childrike a cheftayne holdyne,
That ilke chevalrous mane, he chargges thy pople;

who rob the re-
ligious and ravish
the nuns.

3540 They robbe thy religeous, and ravichse thi nonnes,
And redy ryddis with his rowtte to rawnsone þe povere;
ffro Humbyre to Hawyke he haldys his awens,
And alle the cowntr  of Kentt be covenawnte entayllide;

He has seized the
whole of England
and all Arthur's
castles.

3544 The comliche castelles that to the corowne langede,
The holtes, and the hare wode, and the harde bankkes,
Alle þat Henguste and Hors hent in þeire tyme;

He has a fleet of
seven score ships
at Southampton.

Att Southamptone on the see es seven score chippes,
3548 ffrawghte full  of ferse folke, owt of ferre landes,
ffor to fyghte with thy ffrappe, whene þow theme assailles.

But, worst of all,
he has taken
Guinever, and
lives with her as
his wife!

Bot þitt a worde witterly, thowe watte noghte þe werste!
He has weddede Waynore, and hir his wieffe holdis,
3552 And wounnys in the wilde bowndis of þe weste marches,
And has wroghte hire with childe, as wittnesse telles!
Off alle þe wyes of þis worlde, woo motte hym worthe,
Alles wardayne unworthye women  to þeme!

3556 Thus has *syr* Modrede merrede us alle!
ffor-thy I merkede over thees mowntes, to mene þe the
sothe."

- Than the burliche kyng, for brethe at his herte,
 And for this botelesse bale alle his ble chaungide !
- 3560 "By þe rode," sais þe roye, "I salle it revenge !
 Hym salle repente fullæ rathe alle his rewthe werkes !"
 Alle wepande for woo he went to his tentis ;
 Unwynly this wyesse kyng, he wakkenysse his berynes,
- 3564 Clepid in a clarioune kynges and othire,
 Callys themæ to concelle, and of þis cas tellys,—
 "I am with tresone be-trayede, for alle my trewe dedis !
 And alle my travayle es tynt, me tydis no bettire !
- 3568 Hym salle torfere betyde, þis tresone has wroghte,
 And I may traistely hym take, as I am trew lorde !
 This es Modrede, þe mane that I most traystede,
 Has my castelles encrochede, and corownde hyme selvene,
- 3572 With renttes and reches of the rownde table ;
 Has made alle hys retenewys of renayede wrechis,
 And devysed my rewme to dyverse lodes,
 To sowdeours and to Sarazenes owtte of sere londes !
- 3576 He has weddyde Waynore, and hyr to wyefe holdes,
 And a childe es eschapede, the chaunce es no bettire !
 They hafe semblede on the see sevenæ schore chippis,
 fulle of ferromæ folke, to feghte with myne one !
- 3580 ffor-thy to Bretayne the brode buske us by-hovys,
 ffor to brettyne the berynne that has this bale raysede !
 Thare salle no freke men fare, bott alle one fresche horses,
 That are fraistede in fyghte, and floure of my knyghttez :
- 3584 Sir Howelle and syr Hardolfe here salle be leve,
 To be lodes of the ledis that here to me lenges ;
 Lokes in-to Lombardye, that thare no lede chaunge,—
 And tendirly to Tuskayne take tente alles I byde ;
- 3588 Resaywe the rentis of Rome qwenæ þay are rekkenede ;
 Take sesyne the same daye that laste waste assygnede,
 Or elles alle þe ostage withowttyne þe wallys,
 Be hynggyde hye apponæ hyghte alle holly at ones !"
- 3592 **N**owe bownes the bolde kyng with beste knyghtes,
 Gers tromme and trusse and trynes forth aftyre ;

Arthur is overcome by the tidings, and vows revenge.

He calls a Council and tells them the ill news.

They must proceed to Britain at once with all speed.

Sir Howell and Sir Hardolf are left behind to govern Rome and Italy.

Arthur and his best knights journey rapidly towards Britain.

Turnys thorowe Tuskayne, taries bot littille,
 Lyghte noghte in Lumbarddye bot whene þe lyghte
 failede;

3596 Merkes over the mowntaynes fulls mervaylous wayes,
 Ayres thurghe Almaygne evyne at the gayneste;
 fferkes evynne in-to flawndresche with hys ferse
 knyghttes;

In Flanders his
 fleet is assembled.

Within fyftene dayes his flete es assemblede,

3600 And thane he schoupe hym to chippe, and schownnes
 no lengere,

Scherys with a charpe wynde over þe schyre waters;

By þe roche with ropes he rydes one ankere,

Thare the false mene fletyde, and one flode lengede,

He discovers the
 fleet of the enemy
 armed and pre-
 pared for fight.

3604 With chefe chaynes of chare chokkode to-gedyrs,
 Charggede evyns cheke-fulls of chevalrous knyghtes;
 And in þe hynter one heghte, helmes and crestes,
 Hatches with haythens mens hillyd ware thare undyre,
 3608 Prowdliche prutrayede with payntede cloþhys,
 Iche a pece by pece prykyde tylls oþer,
 Dubbyde with dagswaynnes dowblede they seme;
 And thus þe derfe Danamarkes had dyghte alle theyre
 chippys,

3612 That no dynte of no darte dere them ne schoulde:
 Than the roye and þe renkes of the rownde table
 Alle ryally in rede arrayes his chippis;

Then he makes
 ready his ships
 for the battle,

That daye ducheryes he delte, and doubbyde knyghttes,
 3616 Dresses dromowndes and dragges, and drawens upe
 stonys;

The toppe-castelles he stuffede with toyelys, as hyme
 lykyde,

Bendys bowes of vys brothly þare aftyre,

Tolowris tently takelle they ryghttens,

3620 Brasens hedys fulls brode buskede one flones,

Graythes for garnysones gomes arrayes;

Gryme gaddes of stele, ghywes of iryne,

Stirttelys steryne one steryne with styffe mens of armes;

- 3624 Mony luffliche launce appone lofte stoundys,
 Ledys one leburde, lordys and oþer,
 Pyghte payvese one porte, payntede scheldes,
 One hyndire hurdace one highte helmede knyghtes.
 3628 Thus they scheftene fore schotys one thas schire strandys,
 Ilke schalke in his schrowde, fulls scheens ware þeire
 wedys.

The bolde kynges es in a barge and a-bowtte rowes,
 Alle bare-hevvede for besye with beverynes lokkes ;

and rows round
 the fleet to see
 that everything
 is prepared.

- 3632 And a beryne with his bronde, and ane helme betyne,
 Mengede with a mawncelet of maylis of silver,
 Compaste with a coronalle, and coverde fulls ryche ;
 Kayris to yehe a cogge, to comfurthe his knyghttes :

He exhorts his
 knights to be of
 good courage,

- 3636 To Clegys and Cleremownde he cryes one lowde,—
 “ O Gawayne ! O Galyrane ! thies gud mens bodyes.”
 To Loth and to Lyonelle fulls lovefly he melys,
 And to syr Lawncelot de Lake lordliche wordys,—

- 3640 “ Lat es covere þe kyth, the coste es owre ownne ;
 And gere theme brotheliche blenke, alle þone blod-hondes !
 Bryttyne them with-in bourde, and brynne theme þare
 aftyre !

Hewe downe hertly þone heythens tykes !

- 3644 They are harlotes halfe, I hette þow myne honnde !”

Than he coveres his cogge, and caches one ankere,
 Kaughte his comliche helme with þe clere maylis ;
 Buskes baners one brode, betyne of gowles,

goes to his ship,
 and orders the
 anchor to be
 raised.

- 3648 With coronys of clere golde clenliche arraiede ;
 Bot þare was chosene in þe chefe a chalke-white maydene,
 And a childe in hir arme, þat chefe es of hevynne :
 Withowttene changynge in chace, thies ware þe cheefe
 armes

His device is a
 picture of our
 Lady and the
 Child.

- 3652 Of Arthure þe avenaunt, qwhylls he in erthe lengede.
 Thane the marynerse mellys, and maysters of chippis,
 Merily iche a mate menys tille oþer ;

The sailors busy
 themselves to get
 the ships under
 weigh

Of theire termys they talke, how þay ware tydd,

- 3656 Towyns tresselle one trete, trussene upe sailles,

- Bot bonettez one brede, bettrede hatches ;
 Brawndeste browne stele, braggede in trompes ;
 Standis styffe one the stamyne, steris one aftyre ;
 They sail across the strait and the battle begins. 3660 Strekyne over þe streme, thare stryvynge be-gynnes.
 ffro þe wagande wynde owte of þe weste rysses,
 Brethly bessomes with byrre in berynes sailles ;
 With hir bryngges one burde burliche cogges,
 3664 Qwhylls þe bilynge and þe beme brestys in sondyre ;
 So stowtly þe forsterne one þe stam hyttis,
 There is great dashing together of ships. þat stokkes of þe stere-burde strykkys in peces !
 Be thane cogge appone cogge, krayers and oper,
 Grapplings are thrown out. 3668 Castys creepers one crosse als to þe crafte langes :
 Thane was hede-rapys hewene þat helde upe þe mastes ;
 A mighty struggle ensues. Thare was conteke fulle kene, and crachynge of chippys !
 Grett cogges of kampe crasseches in sondyre !
 3672 Mony kabane clevede, cabilles destroyede !
 Knyghtes and kene mene killide the braynes !
 Castles built on the decks are thrown down. Kidd castelles were corvene with alle theire kene wapens,
 Castelles fulle comliche, þat coloured ware faire !
 3676 Upcynes eghelynge þay ochene þare aftyre,
 With þe swynge of þe swerde sweys þe mastys ;
 Masts fall and kill the mariners. Ovyre-fallys in þe firste frekis and othire,
 ffrekke in þe forchipe fey es bylevede !
 3680 Than brothely they bekyre with boustouse tacle,
 Bruschese boldlye one burde, brynyede knyghtes
 Owt of botes one burde was buskede with stonys,
 Bett downe of þe beste, brystis the hetches ;
 Boardings are made and hand-to-hand fights take place. 3684 Som gomys thourghe gyrde with gaddys of yryne,
 Comys gayliche clede englaymous wapene !
 Archers of Englande fulle egerly schottes,
 Hittis thourghe þe harde stele fulle hertly dynattis !
 3688 Sonne hotchene in holle the heþenne knyghtes,
 Hurte thourghe þe harde stele, hele they never !
 Than they falle to þe fyghte, ffoynes with sperys,
 Alle the frekkeste one frownte þat to þe fyghte langes ;
 3692 And ilkone frechely fraystез theire strengthes,

- Were to fyghte in þe flete with theire felle wapyne :
 Thus they dalte þat daye thire dubbide knyghtes,
 Tille alle þe Danes ware dede, and in þe depe throwene !
- 3696 Than Bretones brothely with brondis they hewene,
 Lepys in up one lofte lordeliche berynes ;
 When ledys of owt londys leppyne in waters,
 Alle oure lordes one lowde laughene at ones !
- 3700 Be thane speris whare sprongene, spalddyd chippys,
 Spanyolis spedily sprentyde over burdez ;
 Alle þe kene mene of kampe, knyghtes and oþer,
 Killyd are colde dede, and castyne over burdez !
- 3704 Theire swyers sweyftly has þe swete levyde,
 Heþene hevande on hatche in þer hawe ryse,
 Synkande in þe salte see sevene hundrethe at ones !
 Thane *syr* Gawayne the gude he has þe gree wonnene,
- 3708 And alle þe cogges grete he gafe to his knyghtes,
 Sir Geryne, and *syr* Grisswolde, and othir gret lordes ;
 Garte Galuth a gud gome girde of þaire hedys !
 Thus of þe false flete appone þe flode happenede,
- 3712 And thus þeis feryne folke fey are belevede !
 ȝitt es þe traytour one londe with tryede knyghttes,
 And alle trompede they trippe one trappede stedys ;
 Schewes theme undir schilde one þe schire bankkes ;
- 3716 He ne schownttes for no schame, bot schewes fullē heghe !
 Sir Arthure and Gawayne avyede theme bothene
 To sixty thosandez of mene, þat in theire fyghte hovede ;
 Be this the folke was fellyde, thane was þe flode passede ;
- 3720 Thane was it slyke a slowde in slakkes fullē hugge,
 That let þe kyng for to lande, and the lawe watyre ;
 ffor-thy he lengede one laye for lesynng of horsesyys,
 To loke of his lege mene, and of his lele knyghtes,
- 3724 ȝif any ware lamede or loste, life ȝife they scholde.
 Thane *syr* Gawayne þe gude a galaye he takys,
 And glides up at a gole with gud mene of armes ;
 Whene he growndide for grefe, he gyrdis in þe watere,
- 3728 That to þe girdyll he gos in alle his gylte wedys :

The Danes of
Modred's fleet
are all slain.

Arthur's lords
laugh to see them
leap into the
water.

All Modred's
keen men are
killed.

Sir Gawaine dis-
tributes the ships
among his
knights.

But Modred the
traitor has a land
army of tried
knights.

Arthur's host
wait for the tide
to make before
they land.

Sir Gawaine
wades ashore.

Schottis upe appone þe sonde in syghte of þe lordes,
Sengly with hys soppe, my sorowe es the more!

With baners of his bagys beste of his armes,

3732 He braydes up-on the banke in his bryghte wedys;

He byddys his baneoure, "buske þow belyfe

To þone brode batayle that one þone banke hoves;

And I ensure þow sothe I salle þowe sewe aftyre;

3736 Loke þe blenke for no bronde, ne for no bryghte wapyns,

Bot beris downe of þe beste and bryng theme o-dawe!

Bees noghte abayste of theire boste abyde one þe erthe;

þe have my baneres borne in batailles fulls hugge;

3740 We salle felle þone false, þe fende hafe theire saules!

fflightes faste with þe frape, þe felde salle be oures;

May I þat traytoure overtake, torfere hym tyddes,

That this tresone has tymbyrde to my trewe lorde!

3744 Of sicke a engendure fulls littylls joye happyns,

And þat salle in this jounnee be juggede fulls evens!"

Now they seke over þe sonde þis soppe at þe gayneste,

Sembles one þe sowdecours, and settyts theire dyntys;

3748 Thourghe þe scheldys so schene schalkes þey towche,

With schaftes scheveride schorte of þas schene launces;

Derfe dynttys they dalte with daggande sperys;

One þe danke of þe dewe many dede lyggys,

3752 Dukes, and duszeperis, and dubbide knyghttys;

The doughttyeste of Danemarke undone are for ever!

Thus thas renkes in rewthe rittis theire brenyes,

And rechis of þe richeste unrekens dynttis;

3756 Thare they thronge in the thikke, and thristis to þe erthe

Of the thraeste mene thre hundrethe at ones!

Bot syr Gawayne for grefe myghte noghte agayne-stande,

Umbegrippys a spere, and to a gome rynnys,

3760 þat bare of gowles fulls gaye, with gowces of sylvere;

He gyrdes hym in at þe gorge with his gryme¹ launce,

þat þe growndens glayfe graythes in sondyre!

He bids his
standard-bearer
advance against
Modred's host,
and not fear their
numbers.

He and his little
band charge the
whole army.

They slay three
hundred of the
bravest.

Sir Gawaine kills
the king of Goth-
land.

¹ grown erased from the text and gryme written in margin.

- With þat boystous brayde he bownes hym to dye!
- 3764 The kyngs of Gutlande it was, a gude mans of armes.
 Thayre awawwarde than alle voydes pare aftyre,
 Alles venqueste verrayely with valyant berynes;
 Metis with medilwarde, that Modrede ledys!
- 3768 Oure menes merkes themse to, as themse myshappenede—
 ffor hade *syr* Gawayne hade grace to halde þe grene hille,
 He had wirchipe i-wys wonnene for ever!
 Bot þane *syr* Gawayne i-wysse, he waytes hym wele
- 3772 To wreke hym on this werlaughe, þat þis werre movede;
 And merkes to *syr* Modrede amonge alle his beryns,
 With the Mownttagus, and oþer gret lordys.
 þan *syr* Gawayne was grevede, and with a gret wylle
- 3776 ffewters a faire spere, and freschely askryes,—
 “ffals fosterde foode, the fende have thy bonys!
 ffy one the, felone, and thy false werkys!
 Thow salls be dede and undone for thy derfe dedys,
- 3780 Or I salls dy this daye, þif destanye worthe!”
- Thane his enmye, with oste of owlawede berynes,
 T Alle enangylles abowte oure excellente knyghttez,
 That the traytoure be tresone had tryede hym selvens;
- 3784 Dukes of Danemarke he dyghttes fulls sone,
 And leders of Lettowe, with legyons inewe,
 Umbylappyde oure menes with launcez fulls kene,
 Sowdeours and Sarazenes owte of sere landys,
- 3788 Sixty thosande menes semlyly arrayede,
 Sekerly assembles thare one sevenschore knyghtes,
 Sodaynly in dischayte by tha salte strandes.
 Thane *syr* Gawayne grette with his gray eghens,
- 3792 ffor grefe of his gud menes that he gyde schulde;
 He wyste that thay wondyde ware, and wery for-
 foughttene,
 And what for wondire and woo, alle his witte faylede.
 And thane syghande he saide, with sylande terys,—
- 3796 “We are with Sarazenes be-sett appon sere halfes!
 I syghe noghte for myselfe, sa helpe oure Lorde;

The vanguard of
the army flies.

Gawaine rashly
advances against
the centre, where
Modred is with
the Montagus and
other great lords.

Gawaine puts a
fresh spear in
rest, and assails
Modred with re-
proaches.

The host of the
enemy, number-
ing sixty thou-
sand men, sur-
round Gawaine
and his little
band.

Gawaine weeps
and laments for
the danger of his
men.

- Bot for to us supprysede, my sorowe es the more.
 Bes dowghtty to-daye, þone dukes schalle be þoures !
 3800 ffor dere Dryghttyn this daye dredys no wapyns.
 We salle ende this daye alles excellent knyghttes,
 Ayere to endelesse joye with angelles unwemmyde.
 þofe we hafe unwittily wastede oure selfene,
 3804 We salle wirke alle wele in þe wirchipe of Cryste.
 We salle for þone Sarazenes, I sekire þow my trowhe,
 Souppe with oure Saveoure solely in hevene,
 In presence of þat precious prynce of alle oþer
 3808 With prophetes, and patriarkes, and apostlys fulle nobille,
 Be-fore his freliche face that fourmede us alle !
 þondire to þone þaldsones, he þat þeldes hyme ever,
 Qwhylyes he es qwykke and in qwerte unquellyde with
 handis ;
 3812 Be he never mo savede, ne socourede with Cryste,
 Bot Satanase his sawle mowe synke in-to helle !"
 Then grymly syr Gawayne gryppis hys wapyns,
 Agayne þat gret bataille he graythes hym sons ;
 3816 Radly of his riche swerde he reghttes þe cheynys,
 In he schokkes his schelde, schountes he no lengare ;
 Bot alles unwyse wodewyse he wente at þe gayneste,
 Wondis of thas werdirwyns with wrakfufle dynttys,
 3820 Alle wellys fulle of blode, thare he awaye passes ;
 And þofe hym ware fulle woo, he wondys bot lyttill,
 Bot wrekyis at his wirchipe þe wrethe of hys lorde !
 He stekys stedis in stoure, and sterenefulle knyghttes,
 3824 That steryne mene in theire sterapes stone dede þay lygge !
 He rybys þe ranke stele, he rittes þe mayles ;
 Thare myghte no renke hym areste, his resone was
 passede !
 He felle in a fransye for fersenesse of herte,
 3828 He feghttis and fellis downe þat hyme be-fore standis !
 ffelle never fay mane siche fortune in erthe !
 Into þe hale bataile hedlynge he rynnys,
 And hurtes of þe hardieste þat one the erthe lenges !

He comforts
them with pro-
mises of blessings
in Heaven.

They shall sup
with propheta,
patriarchs, and
apostles.

Perish the base
slave that yields!

Then Gawaine
grimly grips his
weapon,

and rushes into
the fray.

He performs
mighty deeds of
arms.

He fights like a
madman.

- 3832 Letande alles a lyone, he lawnces them^e thorowe,
 Lordes and ledars, that one the launde hoves !
 ȝit *syr* Gawayne for wo wondis bot lyttill,
 Bot woundis of thas wedirwynes with wondirfull^e dyntes,
- 3836 Alls he þat wold wilfully wastene hyme selfene ;
 And for wondsome and wille alle his wit failede,
 That wode alles a wyld^e beste he wente at þe gayneste ; Like a wild beast
he goes on wal-
lowing in blood.
 Alle walewede one blode, thare he awaye passede ;
- 3840 Iche a wy may be-warre, be wreke of anoþer !
Than he moves to *syr* Modrede amange alle his knyghttes,
 And mett hyme in þe myde schelde, and mallis hyme
 thorowe ;
 Bot the schalke for the scharpe he schownttes a littill,
- 3844 He schare hyme one þe schorte rybbys a schaftmonde He wounds Mo-
dred in the side.
 large !
 The schafte schoderede and schotte in the schire beryne,
 þat the schadande blode over his schanke rynnyes,
 Andschewede one hisschynbawde, þat was schire burneste !
- 3848 And so they schyfte and schove, he schotte to þe erthe ; Modred falls to
the earth.
 With þe lussche of þe launce he lyghte one hys schuldrys,
 Ane akere lenghe one a launde, full^e lothely wondide.
 Than Gawayne gyrde to þe gome, and one þe groffe fallis ; Gawayne strives
to finish him with
a dagger, but
misses his blow.
- 3852 Alles his grefe was graythede, his grace was no bettyre !
 He schokkes owtte a schorte knyfe schethede with silvere,
 And scholde have slottede hyme in, bot no slytte
 happenede :
 His hand sleppid and slode o-slante one þe mayles,
- 3856 And þe toþer slely slynges hym undire :
 With a trenchande knyfe the traytoure hym hyttes,
 Thorowe þe helme and þe hede, one heyghe one þe brayne : Modred, with a
sharp dagger,
stabs Gawayne
through the
brain.
 And thus *syr* Gawayne es gone, the gude man of armes,
- 3860 With-owttyne rescewe of renke, and rewghe es þe more !
 Thus *syr* Gawayne es gone, that gyede many othire ; Gawayne, the
good man of
arms, is gone !
 ffro Gower^e to Gernesay, alle þe gret lordys
 Of Glamour, of Galys londe, þis galyarde knyghtes,
 3864 ffor glent of gloppynyng glade be they never !

King Frederick
asks who he was.

K yng ffroderike offres fraythely þare aftyre,
ffraynes at the false mane of owre ferse knyghte;
"Knew thou ever this knyghte in thi kithe ryche,
3868 Of whate kynde he was comene, be-knowe now þe sothe;
Qwat gome was he this with the gaye armes,
With þis gryffoun of golde, þat es one growffe fallyne;
He has grettly greffede us, sa me Gode helpe!

Modred tells
him that he was
Sir Gawaine the
good, the merri-
est, the kindest,
and the bravest
of knights!

3872 Gyrde downe oure gude mene, and grevede us sore!
He was þe sterynneste in stoure that ever stele werryde,
ffore he has stonayede oure stale, and stroyede for ever!"
Than syr Mordrede with mouthe melis fulle faire;
3876 "He was makles one molde, mane be my trowhe;
This was syr Gawayne the gude, þe gladdeste of othire,
And the graciouseste gome that undire God lyffede,
Mane hardyeste of hande, happyeste in armes,
3880 And the hendeste in hawle undire hevene riche;
þe lordelieste of ledyngs qwhylls he lyffe myghte,
ffore he was lyone allossede in londes i-newe;
Had thou knawene hym, syr kyngs in kythe thare he
lengede,

Modred weeps
for the fate of
Gawaine.

3884 His konyng, his knyghthode, his kyndly werkes,
His doying, his doughtynesse, his dedis of armes,
Thow wolde hafe dole for his dede þe dayes of thy life!"
ʒit þat traytour alles tite teris lete he falle,
3888 Turnes hym furthe tite, and talkes no more,
Went wepand awaye and weries the stowndys,
þat ever his werdes ware wroghte siche wandrethe to
wyrke:

He repents of his
wickedness and
retreats,

Whene he thoghte on þis thyng, it thirllde his herte;
3892 ffor sake of his sybb blode sygheande he rydys;
When þat renayede renke remembirde hym solvens,
Of reverence and ryotes of þe rownde table.
He rennyd and repent hym of alle his rewthe werkes,
3896 Rode awaye with his rowte, ristys he no lengere,
ffor rade of oure riche kyng, ryve þat he scholde;
Thane kayres he to Cornewaile, carefull in herte,

- Because of his kynsemane that one the coste ligges : goes into Corn-
wall,
- 3900 He taries tremlande ay, tydandis to herkenē.
Than the traytoure treunted þe Tyseday þar-aftyre,
Trynnys in with a trayne tresone to wirke,
And by þe Tambire þat tide his tentis he reris,
- 3904 And thane in a mette-while a messangere he sendes,
And wraite un-to Waynor how the werlde chaungede,
And what comliche coste the kyng was aryvede,
One floode foughten with his fleete, and fellyd theme
olyfe ;
- 3908 Bade hir ferkenē so ferre, and flee with hir childre,
Whills he myghte wile hymē awaye, and wyne to hir
speche,
Ayre in-to Irelande, in-to þas owte mowntes,
And wonne thare in wilderness with-in tha wast landys ;
- 3912 Than cho þermys and þee at þorke in hir chambire,
Gronys fullē gryssely with gretand teres,
Passes owte of þe palesse with alle hir price maydenys,
Towarde Chestyre in a charre thay chese hir þe wayes,
- 3918 Dighte hir ewyne for to dye with dule at hir herte ;
Scho kayres to Karelyone, and kawghte hir a vaile,
Askes thare þe habite in þe honoure of Criste,
And alle for falsede, and frawde, and fere of hir loverde !
- 3920 **B**ot whene oure wiese kyngē wiste þat Gawayne was
landede,
He al to-wrythes for woo, and wryngande his handes,
Gers lawnche his botes appone a lawe watire,
Londis als a lyone with lordliche knyghtes,
- 3924 Slippes in in the sloppes o-slante to þe girdylle,
Swalters upe swyftly with his swerde drawene,
Bownnys his bataile and baners displayes,
Buskes over þe brode sandes with breth at his herte,
- 3928 fferkes frekkly one felde þare þe feye lygges ;
Of the traytours menē one trappede stedis,
Ten thosandez ware tynte, þe trewghe to acownt,
And certane on owre syde sevenē score knyghtes
- and pitches his
camp by the Ta-
mar.
and from thence
writes to Guin-
ever,
bidding her fly
into Ireland.
But she goes to
Caerleon and
takes the veil.
Arthur is grieved
for Gawayne's
rash landing, and
follows him
wading through
the water.
He slays ten
thousand men in
his great wrath.
Seven score of
his knights are
slain.

3932 In soyte with theire soverayne unsownde are belevede !

Arthur slays
dukes and earls,

The kyng comly over-keste knyghtes and othire,
Erles of Awfrike, and estriche berynes
Of Orgaile and Orekenay, þe Iresche kynges,

3936 The nobileste of Norwayne, nowmbirs fullø hugge,
Dukes of Danamarke, and dubbid knyghtes ;
And the enchede kyng in the gay armes
Lys gronande onø þe grownnde, and girde thorowø evenø !

and makes his
way to where Ga-
waine's men are
surrounded,

3940 The riche kyng ransakes with rewthe at his herte,
And up rypes the renkes of alle þe rownde tabylle ;
Ses theme allø in a soppe in sowte by theme one,
With þe Sarazenes unsownde enserchede abowte ;

and sees Sir Ga-
waine lying dead.

3944 And syr Gawayne the gude in his gaye armes,
Umbegrippede the girse, and one grouffe fallene,
His baners braydene downe, betyne of gowlles,
His brand and his brade schelde al bloody be-rovene ;

3948 Was never oure semliche kyng so sorowfullø in herte,
Ne þat sanke hyme so sade, bot þat sighte one.

With groans and
tears he kisses
the body.

Than gliftis þe gud kyng, and glapyns in herte,
Gronys fullø grisely with gretande teris ;

3952 Knelis downe to the cors, and kaught it in armes,
Kastys upe his umbrere, and kysses hyme sone !
Lokes one his eye-liddis, þat lowkkide ware faire,
His lippis like to þe lede, and his lire falowede !

He bitterly la-
ments the good
knight.

3956 þan the corownde kyng cryes fullø lowde, —
“ Dere kosynø o kynde, in kare am I levede !
ffor nowø my wirchiøpe es wente, and my were endide !
Here es þe hope of my heles, my happyngø of armes !

3960 My herte and my hardynes hale one hym lengede !
My concelle, my comforthø, þat kepide myne herte !
Of alle knyghtes þe kyng þat undir Criste lifede !
þou was worthy to be kyngø, thofo I þe corowne bare !

It was through
his wit that all
his conquests
were made.

3964 My wele and my wirchiøpe of alle þis werlde riche
Was wonnene thourghe syr Gawayne, and thourghe his
witte one !

Allas !” saide syr Arthure, “ nowø ekys my sorowø !

I am uttirly undone in myne awene landes !

3968 A doughtouse derfe dede, þou duellis to longe !

Why drawes þou so one dreghe, thow drownnes myne
herte !”

Than swetes the swete kyngs and in swoone fallis,
Swafres up swiftly, and swetly hym kysses,

3972 Till he burliche berde was bloody be-rowne,
All he had bestes brittenede, and broghte owt of life ;
Ne had *syr* Ewayne comene, and othire grete lordys,
His bolde herte had broustene for bale at þat stownde !

3976 “**B**lyve,” sais thies bolde mene ! “thow blondirs þi
selfene,

Arthur swoons
for grief ; then
starts up and
kisses the dead
knight.

His beard is
smeared in the
blood of Gawaine.

Sir Ewayne and
his knights re-
proach him.

þis es botles bale, for bettir bees it never !

It es no wirchipe i-wysse to wryng thyne hondes,

To wepe als a womane it es no witt holdens !

3980 Be knyghtly of contenauce, als a kyng scholde,
And leve sicke clamoure for Cristes lufe of hevene !”

“ffor blode,” said the bolde kyng, “blyne salls I never,

Or my brayne to-briste, or my breste oþer !

3984 Was never sorowe so softe that sanke to my herte !

Itt es full sabb to myselfe, my sorowe es the more !

Was never so sorowfull a syghte seyne with myne eghene !

He es sakles supprysede for syne of myne one !”

3988 Downe knelis þe kyng, and kryes full lowde ;

With carefull contenauce he karpes thes wordes,—

“O rightwis riche Gode, this rewthe thow be-holde !

þis ryalle rede blode ryne appone erthe ;

3992 It ware worthy to be schrede and schrynede in golde,

ffor it es sakles of syne, sa helpe me oure Lorde !”

Downe knelis þe kyng with kare at his herte,

Kaughte it upe kyndly with his clene handis,

3996 Keste it in a ketille-hatte, and coverde it faire,

And kayres furthe with þe cors in kyghte þare he lenges.

“**H**ere I make myn avowe,” quod the kyng thane,
“To Messie, and to Marie, the mylde qwene of
hevene,

He excuses him-
self on account
of the greatness
of the grief.

He collects Ga-
waine's blood in
a helmet,

and carries away
his body.

Then he makes a
solemn vow that
he will take no
pleasure in the
chase till Ga-
waine be
avenged.

- 4000 I salle never ryvaye, ne racches un-cowpylle
At roo ne rayne dere, þat rynnes apponne erthe;
Never grewhownde late glyde, ne gossehawke latt flye,
Ne never fowle see fellide, þat flieghe with wenge;
4004 ffawkone ne formaylle appone fiste handille,
Ne þitt with gerefawcone rejoyse me in erthe;
Ne regne in my royaltez, ne halde my rownde table,
Tille thi dede, my dere, be dewly revengede!
4008 Bot ever droupe and dare, qwyllas my lyfe lastez,
Tille Drightens and derfe dede hafe done qwate theme
likes!"

The body was
sent straight to
Winchester,

and met by a pro-
cession of monks.

Arthur gives or-
ders that all hon-
our should be
paid to the dead.

- Than kaughte they upe þe cors with kare at theire hertes,
Karyed [it] one a coursere with þe kynge selfene;
4012 The waye unto Wynchestre þay wente at the gayneste,
Wery and wandsomdly, with wondide knyghtes;
Thare come þe prior of the plas, and professide monnkes,
Apas in processione, and with the pryace metys;
4016 And he be-tuke þame the cors of þe knyghte noble,—
"Lokis it be clenly kepyd," he said, "and in þe kirke
holdene,

Done for derygese, as to þe ded fallys;
Menskede with messes, for mede of þe saule:

- 4020 Loke it wante no waxe, ne no wirchipe elles,
And at þe body be bawmede, and one erthe holdene.
þiff thou kepe thi covent, encroche any wirchipe
At my comyng agayne, þif Crist wille it thole;
4024 Abyde of þe beryenge tille they be broughte undire,
þat has wroghte us this woo, and þis werre movede."

Sir Wycher ad-
vises that he
should stay in
Winchester and
rally his forces.

- Than sais syr Wychere þe wy, a wyese mane of armes,
"I rede þe warely wende, and wirkes the beste;
4028 Soiorne in this cete, and semble thi berynes,
And bidde with thi bolde mene in thi burghes riche:
Get owt knyghttez of contres, that castelles holdes,
And owt of garysons grete gude mene of armes,
4032 ffor we are faithely to fewe to feghte with them alle,
þat we see in his sorte appone þe see banks."

With krewelle contenance thane the kyng karpis theis
wordes,—

“I praye the kare noghte, *syr* knyghte, ne caste þou no
dredis!

4036 Hadde I no segge bot myselve one undir sone,
And I may hym see *with* sighte, or one hym sette hondis,

Arthur declares
that he himself
alone is sufficient.

I salle evene amange his mene malle hym to dede,
Are I of þe stede styre halfe a stede lenghe!

4040 I salle hym in his stowre, and stroye hym for ever,
And þare-to make I myne avowe devottly to Cryste,
And to his modyre Marie, þe mylde qwene of hevene!

I salle never sojourne sounde, ne sawghte at myne herte,

He will never
sojourn in city
or town till Mo-
dred be slain.

4044 In ceté ne in subarbe sette appone erthe,
Ne ȝitt slomyre ne slepe *with* my slawe eyghne,
Tills he be slayne þat hym slowghe, ȝif any sleighte
happene:

Bot ever pursue the Payganyis þat my pople distroyede,

4048 Qwyllas I may pare them and pyne, in place þare me
likes.”

Thare durste no renke hym areste of alle þe rownde table,
Ne none paye þat prynce *with* plesande wordes,

None dares to
oppose the fierce
words of Arthur.

Ne none of his lige-mene luke hym in the eyghne,

4052 So lordely he lukes for losse of his knyghttes!

Thane drawes he to Dorsett, and dreches no langere,

Derefullæ dredlesse with drowppande teris;

Kayeris in-to Kornewayle with kare at his herte,

4056 The trays of þe traytoure he trynys fullæ evenne:

And turnys in be þe Treynthe¹ þe traytoure to seche,

flyndis hym in a foreste þe Frydaye there aftire;

The kyng lyghttes one fott, and freschely askryes,

Arthur follows
Modred into
Cornwall and at-
tacks him.

4060 And *with* his freliche folke he has þe folde nomene!

Now isschewis his enmye undire þe wode eynys,

With ostes of alynes fullæ horrebille to schewe!

Sir Mordrede the malebranche, *with* his myche pople,

A vast host of
aliens assault Ar-
thur's men.

4064 ffoundes owt of the foreste appone fele halfes,

¹ ? Tamar.

- In sevene grett batailles semliche arrayede,
 Sixty thowsande mene, the syghte was fullø hugge,
 Alle fyghtande folke of þe ferre laundes,
 There were sixty thousand against 4068
 eighteen hundred.
 faire fetteðe one frownte be tha fresche strondes!
 And alle Arthurs oste was amede with knyghtes
 Bot awghtene hundrethe of alle, entrede in rolles;
 This was a mache un-mete, bot myghttis of Criste,
 4072 To melle with þat multitude in þase man londis.
 Than the royalle roy of þe rownde table
 Rydes one a riche stedes, arrayes his beryns,
 Buskes his awawmwarde, als hym beste likes;
 Arthur on a charger arranges 4076
 his men.
 Syr Ewayne, and syr Errake, and othire gret lordes,
 Demenys the medilwarde menskefully thare aftyre,
 With Merrake and Menyduke, myghty of strenghes;
 Idirous and Alymere, þire avenaunt childrene,
 4080 Ayers with Arthure, with sevene score of knyghtes;
 He rewlis þe rerewarde redyly thare aftyre,
 The rekeneste redy menø of þe rownde table,
 And thus he fittis his folke, and freschely askryes,
 4084 And syene comforthes his menø with knyghtlyche
 wordes—
 He beseeches 4088
 them to do well
 that day and not
 to fear.
 “I beseke þow, sirs, for sake of oure Lorde,
 That þe doo wele to daye, and dredis no wapenø!
 ffighttes fersely nowe, and fendis þoure selvene,
 4088 ffillis downe þone feye folke, the felde sallø be owrs!
 They are Sarazenes þone sorte, un-sownde motte they
 worthe!
 If they are slain 4092
 they will betaken
 straight up to
 Heaven.
 Sett one themø sadlye, for sake of oure Lorde!
 þif us be destaynede to dy to daye one this erthe,
 4092 We sallø be hewede un-to hevene, or we be halfe colde!
 Loke þe lett for no lede lordly to wirche;
 Layes þone laddes lowe be the layke ende!
 Take no tente un-to me, ne tale of me rekke,
 4096 Bes besy one my baners with þoure brighte wapyns,
 That they be strenghely stuffede with steryne knyghtes,
 And holdens lordly one lofte ledys to schewe;

- 3if any renke theme arase, reschowwe theme sone.
 4100 Wirkes now my wirchipe, to daye my werre endys!
 3e wotte my wele and my wo, wirkkys as 3ow likys!
 Crist comly with crowne comforthe 3ow alle,
 ffor 3e kyndeste creatours that ever kynge ledde!
 4104 I gyffe 3ow alle my blyssyng with a blithe wille,
 And alle Bretowns bolde, blythe mote 3e worthe!"
 They pype upe at pryme tyme approaches theme nere,
 Pris mene and priste proves their strengthes;
 4108 Bremly the brethemen bragges in troumppes,
 In cornettes comlyly, whene knyghttes assembles,
 And thane jolyly enjoynys 3eis jentyll knyghttes;
 A jolyere journé a-juggede was never,
 4112 Whene Bretones boldly embraces theire scheldes,
 And cristyne encroyssede theme, and castis in fewtire!
 Than syr Arthure oste his enmye askryes,
 And in they schokke theire scheldes, schontes no
 lengare;
 4116 Schotte to 3e schiltrones, and schowttes fullé heghe,
 Thorowe scheldis fullé schene schalkes they touche!
 Redily thas rydde mene of the rownde table
 With ryalle raunke stele rittys theire mayles;
 4120 Bryneys browddene they briste, and burneste helmys,
 Hewes haythene mene downe, halses in sondre!
 ffyghtande with fyne stele, 3e feye blod rynnys
 Of 3e frekkeste of frounte, unfers ere be-levede.
 4124 Ethyns of Argayle and Irische kynges
 Enverounes oure awawmwarde with venymmos beryns;
 Peghttes and paynymes with perilous wapyns,
 With speres disspetously dissipylles our knyghttes,
 4128 And hewede downe the hendeste with hertly dynttys!
 Thorow the holle batayle they holdene theire wayes;
 3us fersly they fyghte appone sere halves,
 That of 3e bolde Bretones myche blode spillis!
 4132 Thare durste non rescowe theme, for reches in erthe,
 3e steryne ware 3are so stedde, and stuffede wit othire:

To-day his war
ends!

He gives them
his parting bless-
ing.

The Britons fight
furiously.

The vanguard is
surrounded by
the enemy, and
many of them
slain.

He durste noghte stire a steppe, bot stodde for hyme
selvene,

Tille thre stalis ware stroyede be strenghe of hyme one !

4136 "Idrous," *quod* Arthure, "ayre the byhoves !

Arthur bids Sir
Idrus rescue his
father, Sir
Ewaine.

I see *syr* Ewayne *over-sette* with Sarazenes kene !

Redy the for rescows, arraye thee sone !

Hye þe with hardy mene in helpe of thy ffadire !

4140 Sett in one the syde, and socoure þone lordes ;

Bot they be socourrede and sownde, unsawghte be I
never !"

Idrous hyme ansuers earnestly þare aftyre,—

"He es my fadire in faithe, for-sake salle I never !

Sir Idrus replies
that he owes all
duty to his fa-
ther, and that he
had commanded
him not to leave
the king.

4144 He has me fosterde and fedde, and my faire bretherene,

Bot I for-sake this gate, so me Gode helpe,

And sothely alle sybredyne bot thyselfe one ;

I breke never his biddynge for beryne one lyfe,

4148 Bot *ever* bouxome as beste blethely to wyrke !

He commande me kyndly, with knyghtly wordes,

That I schulde lelely one þe lenge, and one noo lede elles ;

I salle hys commandement holde, þif Criste wil me thole !

4152 He es eldare than I, and ende salle we bothene ;

He salle ferkke be-fore, and I salle come aftyre :

þiffe hyme be destaynede to dy to daye one þis erthe,

Criste comly with crowne take kepe to hys saule !"

4156 **T**han remys the riche kyng with rewthe at his herte,
Hewys hys handys on heghte, and to þe hevene lokes,—

Arthur wishes
that he might die
instead of his
knights.

"Qwythene had Dryghttyns destaynede at his dere wille,

þat he hade demyd me to daye to dy for þow alle,

4160 That had I lever than be lorde alle my lyfe tyme,

Off alle þat Alexandere aughte qwhilles he in erthe
lengede."

Sir Ewaine and
Sir Errard per-
form great deeds
of valour before
they are over-
powered and
slain.

Sir Ewayne and *syr* Errake, þes excellent beryns,

Enters in one þe oste, and egerly strykes ;

4164 The ethenys of Orkkenaye and Irische kynges,

pay gobone of þe gretteste with growndone swerdes,

Hewes one þas hulkes with þeire harde wapyns,

- Layed downe þas ledes with lothely dynttys ;
- 4168 Schuldurs and scheldys þay schrede to þe hawnches,
And medilles thourghe mayles, þay merken in sondire !
Siche honoure never aughte none erthely kyng
At theire endyng daye, bot Arthure hymse selvens !
- 4172 So þe droughte of þe daye dryede theire hertes,
That bothe drynkles they dye, dole was þe more !
Now mellys oure medille-warde, and mengene to-gedire. The centre of Ar-
thur's army en-
gages.
- Sir Mordrede þe Malebranche with his myche pople,
- 4176 He had hide hymse be-hynde with-in thas holte eynys,
With halle bataile one hethe, harme es þe more !
He hade sene þe conteke al clene to þe ende,
How oure chevalrye chevyde be chaunces of armes ! Sir Modred had
been watching
the battle, and
preparing to at-
tack the king.
- 4180 He wiste oure folke was for-foughttene, þat þare was
feye levede ;
To encowntere þe kyngse he castes hymse sone,
Bot the churles chekyne hade chaungyde his armes ;
He had sothely for-sakene þe sawturore engrelede, But first he
changes his arms
to conceal him-
self.
- 4184 And laughte upe thre lyons alle of whitte silvyre,
Passande in purple of perrie fulle ryche,
ffor þe kyngse sulde noghte knawe þe cawtelous wriche !
Because of his cowardys he keste of his atyre ;
- 4188 Bot the comliche kyng knewe hym fulle swythe,
Karpis to syr Cadors þes kyndly wordez,—
“ I see the traytoure come þondyr trynande fulle þerne ;
þone ladde with þe lyones es like to hymse-selfene ! But Arthur knows
him at once, and
points him out
to Sir Cador.
- 4192 Hym salle torfere betyde, may I touche ones,
ffor alle his tresone and trayne, alles I am trew lorde !
To day Clarente and Caliburne salle kythe themse to-gedirs, The two famous
swords, Clarent
and Caliburn,
shall this day be
tried one against
the other.
- Whilke es kenere of kerse, or hardare of eghge !
- 4196 ffraiste salle we fyne stele appone fyne wedis :
Itt was my derlyngse dayntevous, and fulle dere holdene,
Kepede fore encorownmentes of kynges enoynttede
One dayes when I dubbyde dukkes and erlles ;
- 4200 It was burliche borne be þe bryghte hiltes ;
I durste never dere it in dedis of armes,

Arthur recog-
nises his sword
which he had
left at Walling-
ford under the
care of the Queen.

Bot ever kepide clene, be-cause of myselvene;
ffor I see Clarent unclede, þat crowne es of swerdes :
4204 My wardrop of Walyngfordhe I wate es distroyede;
Wist no wy of wone bot Waynor hir-selvene,
Scho hade þe kepynge hirselfe of þat kydde wapyne,
Off cofres enclosede þat to þe crowne lengede,
4208 With rynges and reliktes, and þe regale of ffraunce,
That was fflowndene one syr ffrolle, whene he was feye
levyde."

Sir Merriek fights
with Modred
and is forced to
withdraw.

Than syr Marrike in malyncoly metys hyme sone,
With a mellyd mace myghtyly hym strykes;
4212 The bordoure of his bacenett he bristes in sondire,
þat þe schire rede blode over his brene rynnys!
The beryne blenkes for bale, and alle his ble chaunges,
Bot jitt he byddys as a bore, and brymly he strykes!
4216 He braydes owte a brande bryghte als ever ony sylver,
þat was syr Arthure awene, and Utere his fadirs,
In þe wardrop of Walyngfordhe was wonte to be kepede;
þare with þe derfe dogge syche dynttes he rechede,
4220 þe toþer with-drewe one-dreghe and durste do none oþer!
ffor syr Marrake was mane merrede in elde,
And syr Mordrede was myghty, and his moste strenghes;
Come none with-in the compas, knyghte ne none oþer,
4224 With-in þe swyng of swerde, þat ne he þe swete levyd:

Arthur forces his
way to Modred,

þat persayfes oure prynce, and presses to faste,
Strykes into þe stowre by strenghe of hys handis;
Metis with syr Mordrede, he melis unfaire,—

and upbraids
him.

4228 "Turne, traytoure untrew, þe tydys no bettyre;
Be gret Gode thow salle dy with dynt of my handys!
The schalle rescowe no renke ne reches in erthe!"

Then he strikes
him with Cali-
burn and cuts
through his
shield and into
the shoulder.

The kyng with Calaburne knyghtly hym strykes,
4232 The cantelle of þe clere schelde he kerfes in sondyre,
In-to þe schuldyre of þe schalke a schaftmonde large,
þat þe schire rede blode schewede one þe maylys!
He schodirde and schrenkys, and schontes bott lyttile,
4236 Bott schokkes in scharpely in his schene wedys;

The ffelonne with þe ffyne swerde freschely he strykes,
 The ffelettes of þe fferrere syde he flassches in sondyre,
 Thorowe jopowne and jesserawnte of gentille mailes!

Modred, though wounded, strikes Arthur and gives him a terrible wound in the side.

- 4240 The freke fichede in þe flesche an halfe fotte large,
 That derfe dynt was his dede, and dole was þe more
 That ever þat doughtty sulde dy, bot at Dryghttyns
 wyll!

þitt with Calyburne his swerde, fulle knyghttly he
 strykes,

Arthur with Calyburn cuts off the sword-hand of Modred.

- 4244 Kastes in his clere schelde, and coveres hym fulle faire;
 Swappes of þe swerde hande, als he by glenttis,
 Ane inche fro þe elbowe, he ochede it in sondyre,
 þat he swounnes one þe swrathe, and one swym fallis;

- 4248 Thorowe brater of browne stele, and the bryghte mayles,
 That the hilde and þe hande appone þe hethe ligges!
 Thane frescheliche þe freke the ffente upe rererys,
 Brochis hym in with the bronde to þe bryghte hiltys,

Modred dies.

- 4252 And he brawles one the bronde, and bownes to dye.
 "In faye," says þe feye kyng, "sore me for-thynkkes
 That ever siche a false theefe so faire an end haves."
 Qwene they had ffenyste þis feghte, thane was þe felde
 wonnene,

Arthur declares that his end is too good for him.

- 4256 And the false folke in þe felde feye are by-levede!
 Tille a fforeste they fledde, and felle in the grevys,
 And fers foghtande folke folowes them aftyre;
 Howntes and hewes downe the heythene tykes,

Modred's men are defeated and pursued.

- 4260 Mourtherys in the mowntaygnes *syr* Mordrede knyghtes;
 Thare chapyde never no childe, cheftayne ne oper,
 Bot choppes them downe in the chace, it chargys bot
 littylle!

- 4264 **B**ot whene *syr* Arthure anone *syr* Ewayne he fyndys,
 And Errake þe avenaunt, and oper grett lordes,
 He kawghte up *syr* Cadour with care at his herte,
 Sir Clegis, *syr* Cleremonde, þes clere mene of armes,
 Sir Lothe, and *syr* Lyonelle, *syr* Lawncelott and Lowes,

Arthur finds the dead bodies of his knights.

- 4268 Marrake and Meneduke, þat myghty ware ever;

With langoure in the launde thare he layes them to-
gedire,

Lokede one theyre lighames, and with a lowde stevene,
Alles lede þat liste noghte lyfe and loste had his myrthis;

He swoons for
sorrow,

4272 Than he stotays for made, and alle his strenghe faylez,
Lokes up to þe lyfte, and alle his lyre chaunges!
Downne he sweys fulls swythe, and in a swounne fallys!

and bitterly
grieves over his
knights.

Uppe he coveris one kneys, and kryes fulls oftene,—
4276 “Kyng comly with crowne, in care am I levyde!
Alle my lordchipe lawe in lande es layde undyre!
That me has gyfene gwerdones, be grace of hym selvene,
Mayntenyde my manhede be myghte of theire handes,

4280 Made me manly one molde, and mayster in erthe;
In a tenefulle tyme this torfere was rereryde,
That for a traytoure has tynte alle my trewe lordys!
Here rystys the riche blude of the rownde table,

4284 Rebukkede with a rebawde, and rewthe es the more!
I may helpes one hethe house be myne one,
Alles a wafulle wedowe þat wanttes hir beryne!

I may werye and wepe, and wrynge myne handys,
4288 ffor my wytt and my wyrchipe awaye es for ever!

All his joy is
ended, and he
would take leave
of life.

Off alle lordchips I take leve to myne ende!
Here es þe Bretones blode broughte owt of lyfe,
And nowe in þis journee alle my joy endys!”

4292 Thane relyes þe renkes of alle þe rownde table,

The remnants of
his men rally
round him.

To þe ryalle roy thay ride þam alle;
Than assembles fulls sone sevene score knyghtes,
In sighte to paire soverayne, þat was unsownde levede;

4296 Than knelis the crownede kyng, and kryes one lowde,—

He thanks God
for the victory,
and all the glory
which he and his
knights had won.

“I thanke þe, Gode, of thy grace, with a gud wylle;
That gafe us vertue and witt to vencows þis beryns;
And us has grauntede þe gree of theis gret lordes!

4300 He sent us never no schame, ne schenchipe in erthe,
Bot ever ȝit þe overhande of alle oþer kynges:
We hafe no laysere now þese lordys to seke,
ffor ȝone laythely ladde me lamede so sore!

- 4304 Graythe us to Glaschenbery, us gaynes none oþer ;
 Thare we may ryste us with roo, and raunsake oure wondys
 Of þis dere day werke, þe Dryghttens belovede,
 That us has destaynede and demyd to dye in oure awene.”
- 4308 Thane they holde at his heste hally at ones,
 And graythes to Glasschenberye þe gate at þe gayneste ;
 Entres þe Ile of Aveloyne, and Arthure he lyghttes,
 Merkes to a manere there, for myghte he no forthire :
- 4312 A surgyns of Salerne enserches his wondes,
 The kyng sees be asaye þat sownde bese he never,
 And sone to his sekire mens he said theis wordes,—
 “Doo calle me a confessour, with Criste in his armes ;
- 4316 I wille be howselde in haste, whate happe so be-tyddys ;
 Constantyne my cosyne he salls the corowne bere,
 Alles be-commys hym of kynde, þife Criste wille hym thole !
 Beryne, fore my benysones, thowe berye þone lordys,
- 4320 That in baytaille with brondez are broghte owte of lyfe ;
 And sythens merke manly to Mordrede childrens,
 That they bee sleyghely slayne, and slongens in watyrs ;
 Latt no wykkyde wede waxe, ne wrythe one this erthe
- 4324 I warne fore thy wirchipe, wirke alles I bydde !
 I foregyffe alle greffe, for Cristez lufe of hevenes !
 þife Waynor hafe wele wroghte, wele hir be-tydde !”
 He saide *In manus* with mayne one molde whare he ligges,
- 4328 And thus passes his speryt, and spekes he no more !
 The baronage of Bretayne thane, bechopes and othire,
 Graythes them to Glaschenbery with gloppynnande
 hertes,
 To bery thare the bolde kyng, and bryngs to the erthe,
- 4332 With alle wirchipe and welthe þat any wy scholde.
 Throly belles thay ryng, and *Requiem* syngys,
 Dosse messes and matyns with mournande notes :
 Relygeous reveste in their riche copes,
- 4336 Pontyficalles and prelates in precyouse wedys,
 Dukes and dusszeperis in their dule cotes,
 Cowntasses knelande and claspande their handes,

He desires to be taken to Glastonbury.

He enters the Isle of Avelon and is taken to a manor there ; for he could go no further. A surgeon is sent for,

but Arthur desires a Confessor.

He appoints Constantyne, his cousin, his heir.

Orders Modred's children to be slain.

To Guinever he wishes that “if she has well done she may fare well.” Then he says “*In Manus*,” and his spirit passes away.

The Barons of Britain bury Arthur at Glastonbury.

Great mourning was made at his funeral.

Ladys languessande and lowrande to schewe;
 4340 All was buskede in blake, birdes and othire,
 That schewede at the sepulture, with sylande teris;
 Whas never so sorrowfull a syghte seene in theire tyme!

This was the end
 of Arthur of the
 blood of Hector
 and of Priamus
 of Troy.

Thus endis kyng Arthure, as auctors alegges,
 4344 That was of Ectores blude the kyngs sone of Troye,
 And of syr Pryamous the prynce praysede in erthe;
 ffro thythen broghte the Bretons alle his bolde eldyrs
 In-to Bretayne the brode, as þe Bruytte tellys.
 Etc. explicit.

Hic jacet Arthurus, rex quondam rexque futurus.

Here endes Morte Arthure, writene by Robert of Thorntone.

R. Thornton dictus qui scripsit sit benedictus. Amen!

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 Cretoyne, *s.* a sweet sauce, 197.
 Cruel, *adj.* express, strong, clear,
 'cruel wordes,' 88, etc.
 Cundyde, *adj.* enamelled, 765.
 Dagges, *v.* pierces, 2102, 3750.

- Dagswaynes, *s.* rough coverlets, 3610.
- Danke, *s.* moisture, 3751.
- Dares, *v.* trembles, 3226, 4008.
- Darielles or darioles, curries, 199.
(*Lib. Cure Cocorum*, p. 38.)
- Dawez, *s.* days; 'done of dawez,' taken from day, killed, 2056.
- Deesse, *s.* dais, raised part of the hall, 218.
- Deffuse, want, scarceness, 256.
- Dere, *v.* hurt, injure, 2099, 3249.
- Derfe, *adj.* strong, powerful, fierce, 312, 811, 2052, 2653.
- Derflyche, *adv.* dreadfully, strongly, 3278.
- Derygese, *s.* dirges, 4018.
- Dictour, *s.* guardian, 712.
- Dischayte, *s.* ambush, 3790.
- Disspite, *s.* anger, 3164.
- Downkyng, *s.* moisture, 3249.
- Drecchede, *v.* delayed, 754, abode, dwelt, 1264.
- Dredle, *adv.* certes, assuredly, 1504.
- Dreghe, *s.* length, delay, 2916, 3277; 'one-dreghe,' behind.
- Dreghe, *v.* suffer, 3438.
- Dreghely, *adv.* carefully, cautiously, 2028.
- Dromowndes, *s.* vessels of war, 3616.
- Droupe, *v.* sorrow, 4008.
- Drye, or drie, *v.* endure, suffer, 704, 1546.
- Dryfande, *v.* driving, 761.
- Drynchene or drensene, *v.* destroy, 761, 816.
- Dryssede, *v.* directed, ruled, 46.
- Dule, *s.* sorrow, 256.
- Duspere or duchpere, *s.* (douze-pairs), nobles, peers, 66.
- Duttez, *s.* (probably an error for *duntez*, dints, blows) 787.
- Dyspens, *s.* expense, 538.
- Eghelynge, *adv.* edge-wise, 3676.
- Ekkene, *v.* eke, increase, 2009.
- Elagere, *s.* strength, 2978.
- Eldes, *s.* ages, times, 301.
- Elfaydes, *s.* elks? 'some kind of animal' (Halliwell), 2288.
- Eme, *s.* uncle, 1347.
- Enchede, *adj.* fallen, vanquished, 3938.
- Encroche, *v.* obtain possession of, 3213.
- Endordid, *v.* gilded, made to shine, 199.
"Endore it with yokes of eggs."
—(*Lib. Cure Cocorum*, p. 37).
- Englaymeze, *v.* makes slimy or slippery, 1131.
- Englaymous, *adj.* covered with slime, sore, envenomed, 3685.
- Engowschede, *adj.* swelled, puffed up, 2053.
- Engyste, *v.* constrain, 445.
- Enkerly, *adv.* eagerly, 507.
- Empayrede or enpayrede, *v.* impaired, diminished, 474.
- Entamede, *adj.* cut, torn, 1160.
- Enveryde, *adj.* inversed, 1694.
- Erne, ears, 1086.
- Escheffe, *v.* escape, 2301.
- Ettelles, *v.* endeavours, claims, undertakes, 520, 554, 3078.
- Ewyne or ewene, *adv.* even, 762, 774, 1122, 1293.
- Eynes, *s.* thickets, 1283, 1760, 2516.
- Fakene, *v.* fettle, set in order, 742.

- Falterde, *adj.* hanging in folds, 1092.
 Fande, *v.* try, endeavour, take care, 557, 656.
 Fange or faunge, holds, seizes, 425, 1005, 1249.
 Farlande, *s.* foreland, 880.
 Fatthe, *s.* tribute, 425.
 Fawcetez, *s.* cups, 205.
 Fawe, *adj.* variegated, glancing, 747.
 Fawntekyns, *s.* young children, 845.
 Fax, *s.* hair, 1078.
 Fay or fey, *adj.* dead; 'fay-levede,' left dead, killed, 394, 517, 978.
 Fele, *adj.* many, 845, 2162.
 Feletez, *s.* filets, the flesh on the ribs, 1158, 2174.
 Felle, *s.* skin, 1081.
 Felschen, *v.* freshen, 1975.
 Feraunt, *adj.* pleasant, good, 1811.
 Fere, *adj.* whole, sound, unhurt, 2795, 3018.
 Ferkes, *v.* hastens, goes, 933, 984, 1452.
 Ferly, *s.* wonder, 2948.
 Ferlyche, *adj.* wonderful, 925.
 Fernysone, *s.* the closed time for hunting, also the enclosed and fatted deer as opposed to wild (?), 180.
 Ferrers, *adj.* with iron hoops, 2715.
 Ferrome, *adj.* foreign, strange, 3579; 'o ferrome,' afar, at a distance, 857.
 Ferynne, *s.* far part, the other side, 1875.
 Fette, *v.* fetch, 557.
 Fewle, *s.* foil, sword, 2071.
 Fewtyre, *s.* the rest which supported the spear, 1366; 'castys in fewtyre,' lays his spear in rest.
 Feyed, *v.* mutilated, tore, 1114.
 Feyne, *v.* relax, cease, 1147.
 Fichene, *v.* pierce, 2098.
 Filsuez, *v.* dwells, 881.
 Filterde, *adj.* mixed, joined, 780; matted, 1078.
 Firthe or frithe, *s.* wood, 1708.
 Flay, *v.* terrify, 2441, 2780.
 Flayre, *s.* smell, odour, breath, 772.
 Fleche, *s.* part, division, 2482.
 Flecte, *v.* float, swim, 803.
 Flemyde, *v.* burnt, consumed, 1155.
 Fleryande, *adj.* grinning, 1088.
 Fleterede, *adj.* flitting, flying, 2097.
 Flitt, *v.* strike, wound, 2097.
 Flonez, *s.* arrows, 2097.
 Floyne or floygene, *s.* a sort of ship, 743.
 Fluke, *s.* flat-fish, 1088; floke-mouthed, 2780.
 Flyschande, *adj.* piercing, sharp, 2141, 2769.
 Foddenid, *v.* fed, produced, 3247.
 Fome, *s.* foam, smoke, 1079.
 Fonde, *adj.* foolish, mad, savage, 881.
 Fonde or fonode, *v.* try, taste, 147, 366, 3371, 3372.
 Fongede, *v.* took hold of, 3309.
 Foode or fode, *s.* fellow, 3777.
 Fore-lytenede, *v.* decreased, 254.
 Fore-maglede, *v.* engaged, hardly pressed, 1534.
 Fore-thy, *adv.* wherefore, 225.
 For-justede, *adj.* vanquished in fight, 2134, 2896.
 Formaylle, *s.* the female hawk, 4004.

- Forrayse, *v.* forays, lays waste, 1247.
 Forsey, forsoey, or forsesy, *adj.* of great force, 3301, 3308.
 For-wondsome, *adj.* very sorrowful, 3837.
 Fosterde, *s.* foresters, 300.
 Forthire, *adv.* forward, 300; 'the forthire,' the forward or first part.
 Foulde, *s.* earth, 1071.
 Foundez, *v.* goes, advances, 1228.
 Fourte dele, *v.* fourth part, 946.
 Foyle, *s.* box, 2705.
 Fraisez, *v.* questions, examines, (perhaps) tortures, 1248.
 Fraiste, *v.* try, prove, seek, 435, 1038, 3583.
 Fraknede, *adj.* freckled, spotted, 681, 1081.
 Frawnke, *s.* enclosure, 3248.
 Frayne or fraire, *v.* ask, enquire, 337, 1441.
 Fraythely, *adv.* suddenly, at once, 3865.
 Freke, *s.* man, fellow, wretch, 557, 742, 973.
 Frekke, *adj.* bold, eager, vigorous, 3303.
 Frekkly, *adv.* boldly, rapidly, 556, 788.
 Fremedly, *adv.* as a stranger, 1250, 3406.
 Fremmede, *adj.* strange, unkind, 3344.
 Fresone, *s.* Freisland horse, 1365.
 Fretyne or fretene, *adj.* consumed, 844; overlaid, 2142.
 Frithed, *adj.* arranged in hedges, 3248.
 Fromonde, *s.* forehead, 1112.
 Froske, *s.* frog, 1081.
 Froyt, *s.* fruit, 2708.
 Frumentee, *s.* a dish of wheat, milk, plums, etc., 180 (*v. Lib. Cure Cocorum*, p. 7).
 Frusche, *s.* sudden rush, 2901.
 Fruschene, *v.* strife, rout, 2805.
 Frythes, *v.* spare, 656, 1734.
 Fulsomeste, *adj.* foulest, 1061.
 Furthe, *s.* journey, course, 1525; path, roadway, 1897, 2144.
 Fylede, *adj.* defiled, 978.
 Gaddes, *s.* goads, spears, 3622.
 Galede, *v.* screamed, chattered, 927.
 Galte, *s.* pig, boar, 1101.
 Gardwynes, *s.* rewards, 1729.
 Garett, *s.* watch-tower, 562, 3105.
 Gayneste, *adj.* nearest, 487.
 Gayspande, *v.* gasping, 1462.
 Gedlynges or gadlynges, *s.* useless fellows, wretches, 2885.
 Geene, *s.* genies or spirits, 559.
 Gerse, *s.* grasp, 3945.
 Gersoms, *s.* guerdons, rewards, 165.
 Gerte (gers, gars, garte), *v.* caused, made, 1780, 3710.
 Gettlesse, *adj.* empty, possessionless, 2728.
 Ghywes, *s.* gyves, fetters, 3622.
 Glapyns, *v.* is frightened, 3950.
 Glaverande, *adj.* deceitful, treacherous, 2538.
 Glayfe or glaive, *s.* the blade or steel part of the spear, 3762.
 Gledys, *s.* sparks, 117.
 Glent, *s.* glance, 3864.
 Gliftes, *v.* looks, 3950.
 Glopned, *v.* was astonished, frightened, 1074, 2580.
 Glopynnyng, *s.* astonishment, 3864.

- Glorede, *v.* glared, stared, 1074.
 Gobbede or gabbede, *adj.* deceitful, 1346.
 Gobelets, *s.* part of the armour for the legs, 913.
 Gobone, ? govone, *v.* gave, 4165.
 Gole, *s.* small creek, 3726.
 Gome, *s.* man, 85, etc.
 Gose, *imp.* of go; 'gose over,' recount, 1266.
 Gowces, *s.* the pieces of armour to protect the arm-pits, 3760.
 Gowke, *s.* cuckoo, 927.
 Grame, *s.* anger, grief, 1077, 3009.
 Granes, *v.* groans, 2562.
 Grape, *v.* feel, meditate, 2726.
 Grassede, *v.* decked, furnished, 1091.
 Graynes, *s.* red colour, 3464.
 Graythide, *v.* gathered, arrayed, 373, 589, 602.
 Grayvez, *s.* grieves, steel boots, 913, 2272.
 Grees, *s.* season allotted for sport-ing, 658.
 Grette, *v.* greeted, 84.
 Gretande, *v.* crying, weeping, 951.
 Grevede, *v.* snarled, gnashed his teeth, 1075.
 Grevez or grefes, *s.* groves, 927, 1874, 2282.
 Groffe, *s.* face, 3851. In O.E. 'groveling,' face downwards.
 Grucchande, *adj.* grumbling, 1076.
 Grygyngge, *s.* 2510.
 Grylych or gryslyche, *adj.* horrible, 1101.
 Grythgide, *v.* vexed, 2557.
 Gumbaldes, *s.* dishes of pastry, 2964.
 Gye, *v.* direct, walk aright, 4.
 Halfes, *s.* parts, sides, 441; 'sere halves,' several sides.
 Hally, *adv.* wholly, 1085.
 Halse, *s.* necks, throats, and so heads, 1798.
 Harlotte, *s.* common soldier, low fellow, 2446.
 Harawnte, *v.* march, advance, 2449.
 Harske, *adj.* rough, harsh, 1084.
 Hathelle, *adj.* noble, great, 358, 988.
 Haylede, *v.* dropped, 2077.
 Hawe, *s.* awe, fear (?), 3705.
 Heddys-mene, *s.* chief men, rulers, 281.
 Hede-rapys, *s.* head-ropes, 3669.
 Hedlynge, *adv.* headlong, 3830.
 Hedoyne, *s.* a sauce, 184.
 Heldede, *v.* inclined, obeyed, 3369.
 Hele, *s.* health, comfort, 2631.
 Hemmes, *s.* borders, hems, 1648.
 Hende, *adv.* close at hand, 1283.
 Hende, *adj.* gentle, 2631, 3880.
 Hente, *s.* hold, 1842.
 Hentez, *v.* seizes, holds, 1132, 2918.
 Herbarjourns, *s.* leaders, advanced guard, 2448.
 Herbergage, *s.* lodging, encampment, 3015.
 Herede, *adj.* covered with hair, 1083.
 Herne-pane, *s.* brain-pan, skull, 2229.
 Heslyne, *adj.* of hazel, 2504.
 Hete or hette, *v.* promise, 2127, 2632.
 Hethely, *adv.* contemptuously, 268.
 Hethynge, *s.* scorn, 1842.
 Hevede, *s.* head; 'appone-hevede,' head-foremost, 262.
 Hewede, *v.* carried, 4092.

- Hey (*superl.* hext), *adj.* high, 166.
 Heyndly, *adv.* courteously, 15.
 Heynne (for heþne or heþune), *adv.* hence, 2436.
 Hillid, buried in the flesh, covered, 1120, 3607.
 Hirste or hurste, *s.* wood, 3370.
 Hodles, *v.* crawls, 2308.
 Hopes, *s.* valleys, 2503.
 Hovys, *v.* stay, remain, 377, 713.
 Hoursches, *v.* goes headlong, 2110.
 Hufe, *v.* rage, fuss, 1688.
 Huke, *s.* cloke, 734.
 Huke-nebbyde, *adj.* hook-nosed, 1082.
 Hulke, *s.* wretch, fellow, 1058, 1085.
 Hunde-fisch, *s.* dog-fish, 1084.
 Hurdace, *s.* scaffolding, platform, 3627.
 Hurdez, *v.* abides, 1010.
 Hyely, *adv.* loudly, 1058.
 Hyled, *v.* covered, 184.
 Hymlande, *adj.* encircling, hemming in, 2503.
 Hyngede, *v.* hanged, 281.
 Iche, *v.* rush, charge, 1411.
 Innette, *s.* internals, 1122.
 Irous, *adj.* angry, passionate, 1329.
 Jaggede or joggede, *v.* pierced, 2910, 2892, 2894.
 Jambe, *adj.* capering, active (see *Rambe*), 2895.
 Japez, mocks, jests, 1398.
 Jeryne, *s.* piece of armour; 'jeryne of acres,' armour of Acre, 903.
 Joynter, *s.* joints of the armour, 2894.
 Justyfy, *v.* do justice to, 663.
 Kaunt, *adj.* bold, 2195.
 Kayre or cayre, *v.* go, journey, 6, 243, etc.
 Kele, *v.* cool, 1839.
 Kelle or calle, *s.* cap or coif, 3259.
 Kempe, *v.* contend for superiority, 2634.
 Kempis, *s.* knights, 1003.
 Kenet, *s.* a small hound, 122.
 Kerse, *s.* strength, temper of sword, 4195.
 Kest, *v.* cast, 118.
 Ketelle-hatte, *s.* helmet, 2094, 3996.
 Klevys, *s.* cliffs, 2396.
 Klokes, *s.* clutches, claws, 792.
 Kwne, *v.* give, 1565.
 Kyd or kydd, *adj.* famous, 96, etc.
 Kyrnelles, *s.* embattlements, 3047.
 Kystys, *s.* chests, coffers, 2302, 2336.
 Kyth, *s.* country, kingdom, 28, etc.
 Lached, *v.* stripped, 1515.
 Lade-sterne, *s.* load-star, leading or guiding star, 751.
 Lakes, *s.* locks, 2149.
 Lagere, *s.* couch, 2293.
 Laggene, *v.* tilt, 2542.
 Laghte or laughte, *v.* taken, 874, 1817, 1826.
 Late or lote, *s.* look, features, 248, 536, 1467.
 Lathe, *s.* ease, compliance, 458; "Be now lathe or lette," Be there compliance or opposition.
 Layke, *s.* sport, game, 1599.
 Layne, *v.* conceal, 2398, 2594.
 Layttede, *v.* sought, acquired, held to be in possession of, 254.
 Lechene, *v.* heal, cure, 2388.

Lechhyde, *adj.* cut in slices, 188 ; *v.*

Lib. Cure Cocorum, pp. 13, 50.

Lede, *s.* lad, man, 138, etc.

Lemand, *adj.* glittering, gleaming, 2463, 2464.

Lendez, *s.* loins, 1047.

Lenge, *v.* lounge, delay, tarry, 72, 343.

Lesse, *v.* lose, 1599.

Lesse, *s.* lie, 159.

Letande, *v.* looking, 3832.

Letherly, *adv.* vilely, shamefully, 1268.

Leskes, *s.* flanks, 1097, 3280.

Leve, *v.* believe, 1099.

Levere, *s.* encampment, 3079.

Ligham, *s.* dead body, 3282, 4270.

Lire, *s.* flesh, face, 3282, 3955, 4273.

Lokerde, *adj.* distorted, 779.

Los or loosse, *s.* honour, praise, 254, 474.

Lothene, *adj.* hideous, 778.

Lowe, *s.* flame, heat, glare, 194.

Lowrande, *adj.* sad, gloomy, 1446.

Lowttede, *v.* worshipped, bowed down to, 3286.

Loyotour, *s.* embroidery, 3254.

Lufe, *s.* the loof of a ship, 744, 750.

Luffly, *adv.* lovingly, 248.

Lugge or lygge, *v.* lodge, lie, stay, remain, 152.

Lussche, *s.* violence, force, 3849.

Lutterde, *adj.* crooked, twisted, 779.

Luyschede, *v.* lashed out, 2226.

Lyarde, *adj.* disordered, 3281.

Lygmane, *s.* liegeman, 420.

Lympyde, *v.* happened, befell, 292, 875.

Lyth, *v.* listen, 12.

"Thenne watz hit lif upon list to lythen the houndez."

—(Sir Gawaine, 1719.)

Lythe, *adj.* gentle, smooth, 1517.

Lythe, *s.* land, property, kingdom, 994, 1653.

Lythyre, *s.* leader, ruler (?), 23.

Mangere, *s.* diet, keep of a prisoner, 1588.

Manrede, *s.* power, *lit.* homage, 127.

Mason dewes, *s.* Maisons Dieu, hospitals, 3039.

Mele, *v.* speak, 382, 679.

Melle, *v.* mingle, communicate, 938.

Menske, *s.* honour, 126.

Menskes, *v.* deserves honour, 1303.

Merke, *v.* go, 427, etc.

Merkes, *s.* boundaries, 1147.

Mett, *v.* dreamed, 3224.

Mofes, *v.* overcomes, 3324.

Moles, *v.* 3057. See *Mele*.

Mone, *v.* shall (Prov. ? *mun*), 813.

Mowe, *v.* may, 3813.

Mysese (? plural of *myx*) *s.* wretches, 667.

Mysse, *s.* evil, wrong, 1315.

Myx, *s.* wretch, 989.

Naye, *s.* (yolke of a nay, for *ȝolke* of an aye = egg) 3284.

Nedys, *s.* needs, demands, 85.

Neyvesome, *adj.* renowned, 523.

Notez, *v.* make use of, 1815.

Notte, *s.* business, affair, 1816.

Nomene, *v.* taken, 1437.

Nurree, *s.* adopted child, 689.

Oches, *v.* breaks, 2565, 3676.

O-dawe, *adv.* out of days, *i.e.* out of life (see *Dawex*), 3737.

- On-dreghe, *adv.* at a distance, 786, 787.
- Orfracez, *s.* embroideries, ornaments, 902, 2142.
- Ostayande, *v.* sojourning, 3503
- Overlynge, *s.* superior, ruler, 289, 520.
- Ownd, *adj.* laced, slashed, 193.
- Owte, *adj.* foreign, 30.
- Palle, *s.* fine cloth, 1288, 2478.
- Palyd, *v.* ornamented, 1287, 1375.
- Pare, *v.* injure, 4048.
- Pastorelles, *s.* shepherds, swine-herds, 3121.
- Paumes, *s.* hands, claws, 776.
- Pavys, *s.* a shield, 3461, 3626.
- Pavysers, *s.* soldiers armed with the pavys, 3005.
- Payses, *v.* force, 3038, 3043.
- Peghttes, *s.* Picts, 4126.
- Pensels, *s.* small banners, 1289, 2411.
- Perrye, *s.* jewellery, 2461, 3462.
- Pertly, *adv.* apart, 2918.
- Pertyes, *v.* parts, 1925.
- Pillion (hat), *s.* priest's, or large hat.
- Pilour, *s.* pilferer, robber, 2133.
- Plasche, *s.* a marshy piece of ground, 2799.
- Plattes, *s.* planks for seats, 2478.
- Plumpe, *s.* crowd, 2199.
- Plyande, *v.* working, 777.
- Pome, *s.* the kingly globe, 3355.
- Pomelle, *s.* small globe at the head of a flag-staff, 1289.
- Poveralle, *adj.* poor, labouring men, 3121.
- Poyne, *v.* stitch with a bodkin, 2625.
- Prys or pris, *adj.* precious, chief, 2, 569.
- Pyghte, *adj.* decked, garnished, pitched, 212, 1300, 2478.
- Pykes, *s.* points, 777.
- Pyne, *s.* lamentation, 3044.
- Pynne, *v.* pine, annoy, trouble, 4048.
- Qwarelles, *s.* short arrows for cross bow, 2103.
- Querte—'in querte,' equivalent to being in life; querte, joy, activity, life, 3811.
- Qwarte, *v.* quashed, smashed, 3390.
- Qwyke, *adj.* alive, 1736.
- Qwyne, *adv.* whence, 3504.
- Raas, *v.* tear, snatch, 362.
- Racches, *s.* scenting hounds, 4000.
- Rade, *adj.* afraid, 2882.
- Radly, *adv.* swiftly, 1529.
- Radness, *s.* fear, 120.
- Raike or rayke, *s.* path, 1525, 2986.
- Ramby or jambe, *adj.* prancing, spirited, 373, 2895.
- Ranez, *s.* rushes, 923.
- Raply, *adv.* quickly, 1763.
- Rared, *v.* roared, 784.
- Rasches, *v.* rush, go rashly, 2107.
- Rathe, rathely, or raythely, *adv.* quickly, soon, 237, 1275.
- Raw (on), *s.* in rotation, 633.
- Rawnsakes (*imp.*) *v.* search, 3229, 3740; probe, 4305.
- Raykede, *v.* rushed, flowed, ran, 237, 1057, 2984.
- Raylide, *v.* arrayed, ornamented, 3264.
- Raymede, *v.* roamed, made incursion, 100.

- Reched, *s.* jewels, 3264.
 Reddour, *s.* violence, eagerness, succour, 109, 485, 1418.
 Rede, *v.* advise, 550.
 Redyne, *v.* disposed of, 52.
 Refede, *v.* deprived, 960.
 Rehetede, *v.* received, entertained, cheered, 221, 411, 3199.
 Reke, *s.* path, 1041.
 Relevis, *v.* rally, 2278.
 Remmes or remys, *v.* cries, laments, 2197, 4156.
 Renayede, *adj.* renegade, 2914, 3573.
 Renye, *s.* renegade, 2795.
 Rependez, *v.* hasten, 2107.
 Revaye, *v.* rejoice, 3276.
 Revare, *s.* river, 62.
 Rewe, *v.* have pity, 866.
 Rewfulle, *adj.* sorrowful, 1049.
 Reynes, *s.* journey, course, 3165.
 Rigg, *s.* back, 800.
 Rittes, *v.* rends, dashes in pieces, 2138, 3754, 3825.
 Rog, *s.* assembly, people? 3273.
 Roggede, *v.* rocked? 784.
 Romede, *v.* growl, roar, groan, 424, 784, 888.
 Roo, *s.* misfortune, evil, 1751.
 Roo, *s.* wheel, 3363, 3375.
 Roo, *s.* roe-deer, 922.
 Rosers, *s.* thickets, 923.
 Rosselde, *adj.* sharpened, 2881.
 Rowme or rowmme, *adj.* wide, loose, roomy, 432, 1454, 3471.
 Rusche, *v.* destroy, overthrow, 1339.
 Rusclede, *adj.* russet-clad, 1096.
 Ruyde, ruydly, or ruydlyche, *adj.* and *adv.* rude, rudely, fiercely, impetuously, 1049, 785, 1877.
 Rybys, *v.* rips, tears, 3825.
 Ryfez, *v.* thrusts, rives, tears, 1474, 2914.
 Ryghttez, *v.* See *Rittes*.
 Ryndez, *s.* thickets, 921, 1884, 3364.
 Rype, *v.* search, 3941.
 Ryste *adj.* rusty, rough, 1428.
 Ryvaye, *v.* hunt, 4000.
 Saghetyle, *v.* be satisfied or reconciled, 330.
 Sakeles, *adj.* innocent, without blame, 3400, 3987, 3994.
 Sale, *s.* hall, court, 82.
 Sandismene, *s.* messengers, 266, 1429.
 Saughte, *s.* peace, 1548, 3053.
 Saynned, *adj.* blessed, cared for, 966, 969.
 Schafte, *s.* spear, 2169.
 Schaftmonde, *s.* spear length, 2546.
 Schake, *v.* hasten, move, advance.
 Schalkes, *s.* men-at-arms, soldiers, 1857, 2211, 2333, 2456, 3748.
 Schalyde, *adj.* enclosed, 766.
 Schathe, scaith, or skaithe, *s.* harm, mischief, 292.
 Schawes or shawes, *s.* glades, 1723, 1760, 1765.
 Schede, *v.* pour, 2923.
 Schenchipe, *s.* disgrace, 4300.
 Scherde, *v.* cut, wounded, destroyed, 1856, 2435.
 Schiltrounis, *s.* bands, 1765, 1813, 1856.
 Schire, *adj.* scanty, 1760; clear, bright, 3845, 3846, 3601.
 Schoderide, *v.* shuddered, 2106.
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- Schowande, *adj.* bending (*lit.* showing), 1099.
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 Schreede, *v.* shred, sprinkled, 767.
 Schrympe, *s.* monster, dragon, 767.
 Schuntes or schountes, *v.* hesitates, delays, 1055.
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 Serfed, *v.* deserved, 1068.
 Sere, *adj.* several, 192, 607.
 Serte, *s.* decree, 2927.
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 Sewand, *v.* following, 81.
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 "Pourre on the *sewe* and serve it."
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 Seyne, *s.* saint, 2871.
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 —(Lib. Cure Cocorum, p. 21.)
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